

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
 Prince George's County Planning Department  
 Development Review Division  
 301-952-3530



*Note: Staff reports can be accessed at [www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm](http://www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm).*

## DETAILED SITE PLAN

## DSP-06037

| Application  | General Data                        |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Name:</b><br>Raymond Towers<br><br><b>Location:</b><br>Baltimore Avenue, across from Pontiac Street<br><br><b>Applicant/Address:</b><br>8400 Baltimore Ave. Assoc., LLC<br>10 South Howard Street, Suite 110<br>Baltimore, MD 21201 | Date Accepted: 10/5/2006            |
|  | Planning Board Action Limit: Waived |
|  | Plan Acreage: 2.1939                |
|  | Zone: M-U-I, DDO                    |
|  | Dwelling Units: 300                 |
|  | Square Footage: 13,990              |
|  | Planning Area: 66                   |
|  | Tier: Developed                     |
|  | Council District: 03                |
|  | Municipality: College Park          |
|  | 200-Scale Base Map: 210NE04         |

| Purpose of Application  | Notice Dates  |
|---|---|
| A mixed-use project of 300 multifamily residential dwelling units and approximately 13,990 square feet of retail use. | Adjoining Property Owners<br>Previous Parties of Record<br>Registered Associations: 8/29/2006<br>(CB-12-2003) |
|   | Sign(s) Posted on Site and<br>Notice of Hearing Mailed: 9/18/2007   |
|   |   |

| Staff Recommendation |                          | Staff Reviewer: H. Zhang, AICP |            |
|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 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-06037, Raymond Towers

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

**EVALUATION**

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

- a. The requirements of the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone;
- b. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the DDO, M-U-I Zones and in Aviation Policy Area.
- c. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*;
- d. The requirements of the *Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance*;
- e. Referrals.

**FINDINGS**

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

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of a mixed-use development with 300 units of mid-rise rental residential apartments and 13,990 square feet of commercial/ retail space.
2. **Development Data Summary:**

|                            | <b>EXISTING</b> | <b>PROPOSED</b>          |
|----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Zone(s)                    | M-U-I/DDOZ      | M-U-I/DDOZ               |
| Use(s)                     | Commercial      | Residential Multifamily, |
|                            | Offices         | Commercial/Retail        |
| Acreage                    | 2.19            | 2.19                     |
| Lots                       | 0               | 0                        |
| Parcels                    | 1               | 1                        |
| Square Footage/GFA         | 42,483          | 13,990                   |
| Multifamily dwelling units | 0               | 300                      |

## OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

### Bedroom Unit Mix

| Unit Type    | Number of Units | Average Square Footage |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1 Bedroom    | 124             | 820                    |
| 2 Bedrooms   | 176             | 1,097                  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>300</b>      |                        |

### Bedroom Percentage

| Unit Type  | Proposed Percentage | Percentage Per Section 27-419   |
|------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Bedroom  | 41.33               | 50                              |
|            |                     | 50 (40% plus 10% unused         |
| 2 Bedrooms | 58.67               | percentage for 3 bedroom units) |
|            | 100                 | 100                             |

### Parking Requirements Per Section 27-568(a)

| Uses   | Parking Spaces |
|--|----------------|
| Multifamily Apartments (300 DUs)   | <b>458</b>     |
| Of which one bedroom units 124(1.33 spaces per unit)   | 165            |
| Two bedroom units 176(1.66 spaces per unit)  | 293            |
| Commercial Space (13,990 square feet)  | <b>75</b>      |
| For the first 3,000 square feet (1space per 150 sq. ft.)   | 20             |
| For the remaining 10,990 square feet (1 space per 200 sq. ft.)   | 55             |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>533</b>     |
| The minimum number of off-street parking spaces permitted for each land use type shall be reduced by 10 percent from the required spaces of Section 27-568 (a) pursuant to Site Design S2. Parking Area, Standard T. of the 2002 <i>Approved College Park US 1Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment</i> |                |
|  | <b>479</b>     |
| Multifamily Apartments   | 412            |
| Commercial   | 67             |

### Shared Parking by Time Period (Pursuant to Table 15, Page 182 in Sector Plan)

| Uses                            | Weekday |         | Weekend |         | Night-time |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
|                                 | Daytime | Evening | Daytime | Evening |            |
| <b>Residential (412 spaces)</b> | 60%=248 | 90%=371 | 80%=330 | 90%=371 | 100%=412   |
| <b>Commercial (67 spaces)</b>   | 60%=41  | 90%=61  | 100%=67 | 70%=47  | 5%=4       |

|                     |            |            |            |            |                        |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------|
| <b>Total Spaces</b> | <b>289</b> | <b>432</b> | <b>397</b> | <b>418</b> | <b>416<sup>†</sup></b> |
|---------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------------|

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Parking Provided</b>                            | <b>433 Spaces</b> |
| Of which Surface parking spaces                    | 11                |
| Standard structured parking spaces                 | 252               |
| Compact structured parking spaces                  | 170               |
| Handicapped spaces required (2% of total required) | 9                 |
| Provided   | 10                |

**Notes:** <sup>†</sup> The highest number of parking spaces becomes the minimum number of spaces required; therefore a total of 432 spaces is required. The plan provides a total of 433 parking spaces but compact spaces account for 39 percent of the total number of required spaces. This is in excess of the one-third permitted per Section 27-559(a).

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Loading Required*</b> per Section 27-582 | <b>3</b> |
| Retail 2 spaces/10,000-100,000 GFA          | 2        |
| Multifamily 1 space/100-300 DUs             | 1        |

**Notes\*:** The DSP does not provide any information regarding the number of loading spaces proposed.

3. **Location:** The site is located on the west side of US 1, directly across from Pontiac Street within the City of College Park, in Planning Area 66, and Council District 3. The site is also located in Area 3 (Main Street Area), Subarea 3a, of the Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan where detailed site plan review is required for conformance with the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) standards. A significant portion of the site is located in the 100-year floodplain of Paint Branch. The property is located in Aviation Policy Area (APA)-6 of the College Park Airport.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The site is bounded on the east side by US 1, a variable width right-of-way; on the south by Koon's Ford and University View, a 13-story, 352-unit student housing building (a 10-story, 183,094-square-foot office building was also approved for this site but has not yet been built) both of which are in the M-U-I Zone; to the west by Acredale Community Park in the R-O-S Zone; and to the north by a Los Cabos Restaurant in the M-U-I Zone.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, which was approved by the District Council on April 30, 2002 (CR-18-2002), rezoned the property from the C-S-C and C-O Zones to the M-U-I Zone and superimposed a development district overlay zone on both parts. On October 12, 2005, the Subdivision Section granted an exemption from preliminary plan of subdivision per Section 24-107(c)(7)(D) given that the existing building consists of 42,483 square feet (44 percent) of the total area of the lot and was permitted in November of 1969. The site also has an approved stormwater management concept plan #27385-2006-01, which will be valid through March 8, 2010.
6. **Design Features:** The proposed residential and commercial retail uses are designed in one L-shaped building which includes four levels of structured parking. The 12-story building has 123.4 feet or 61.7 percent of frontage occupied by retail storefronts on US 1. Storefronts are located

along the building's direct frontage on US 1 in a two-story projection from the main building. The storefronts are treated with split-faced block and depict typical storefront windows and awnings. A faux second story treated with synthetic stucco is located above the retail component creating a terraced roof line. The multifamily portion of the project begins on the fifth story, set back approximately 30 feet from the retail element and above four stories of structured parking. The façade of the main portion of the building is predominately brick and features three main fenestration patterns, which establish a consistent columnar organization. Recesses in the façade are proposed at regular intervals, creating some visual interest. Residential balconies are proposed on the western side of the building, providing residents with both scenic views of Paint Branch and adjacent Acredale Community Park and natural surveillance of the future master plan trail along Paint Branch. Except for the retail portion of the building, the first four stories are proposed as structured parking. Split-faced masonry is extended from the storefront facades and is the single treatment material for the parking structure. The structure exhibits typical elongated rectangle shaped openings and is highly visible from the north, east and south. According to the information provided by the applicant, the lot coverage is 77.7 percent, which is not correct. In fact, based on staff's calculation, the lot coverage is approximately 86 percent.

The site plan shows two vehicular accesses to the site: one directly from US1 and the other via the existing access to University View. The two accesses converge at a circular drive with an island treated with concrete pavers in a herringbone pattern, off of which the two parking garage entries are accessed. Minimal surface parking is provided on both sides of the northern access between the circular drive and US1. Pedestrian access to the retail fronting on US 1 is provided through an eight-foot-high elevated terrace. There are no ramps for the handicapped provided. Sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, including benches, bike racks and planters have been shown along the site's frontage on US1. An approximately 12-foot-long landscape strip including street trees and street light fixtures provides a break in the sidewalk between the commercial storefront and US 1. The sidewalk shown immediately adjacent to US1 ends abruptly even though a connection is possible at the northeastern corner of the site.

An eight-foot-tall monumental sign is proposed at the northeastern corner of the site. The sign is fabricated with concrete masonry and is embellished with a decorative pre-cast concrete cornice. Although the sector plan does not specifically prohibit monumental signs, staff believes that building-mounting signage would be more appropriate considering the pedestrian-focused vision for this area. In addition, no sign-face area information was provided. DDOZ standards allow up to a maximum of 100 square feet of sign-face area.

7. **Recreation Facilities:** The subject DSP includes a recreational facility package consisting of a 714-square-foot swimming pool, a 1,028-square-foot fitness room, a 1,346-square-foot club room and a 695-square-foot bathhouse with facilities. There is also a 3,756-square-foot open terrace on the fifth floor where the swimming pool is located. Per the current formula for determining the value of recreational facilities to be provided in subdivisions, for 300 multifamily dwelling units in Planning Area 66, a recreational facility package of approximately \$170,000.00 is required. In accordance with the cost information provided by the application, the above mentioned recreational facilities and amenities are well above the minimum value required for this project.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

8. **The 2002 Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment and the standards of the development district overlay zone (DDOZ):** The 2002 College Park US 1 Corridor Plan defines long-range land use and development policies, detailed zoning changes, design standards and a DDOZ for the US 1 corridor area. The land use concept of the

sector plan divides the corridor into six areas for the purpose of examining issues and opportunities and formulating recommendations. Each area has been further divided into subareas for the purpose of defining the desired land use types, mixes, and development character. The subject site is in Area 3 (Main Street), Subarea 3a, on the west side of US 1. The vision for Area 3 is to create a neighborhood main street district featuring a compact mix of retail shopping, restaurants and offices in low-to mid-rise buildings to meet the demand created by the proximity to the research and engineering facilities of the university. The sector plan also provides specific subarea land use recommendations for Subarea 3a, west side of US 1, which is adjacent to the Paint Branch Stream Valley Park and the engineering/sciences district of the university. The application as proposed in the subject detailed site plan, especially the site design and layout, the proposed intensity of the development and the elevation of the garage as well as the streetscape are not consistent with the land use vision of main street for this subarea. The site plan has a lot coverage of 86 percent. The garage and building façade is designed in such a continuous expanse that forms a huge monotonous wall (twelve-story high) along US 1. Of the approximately 360 feet of frontage of this project that will be visible from US 1, less than one third is designed with retail storefronts. A one-story Koon's auto service building that is located between the proposed building and US 1 occupies the leftover two thirds of the frontage. Because the garage is four stories high, the garage elevation is visually dominant for more than two thirds of the US 1 frontage. If the project were built as proposed, the garage elevation of the first four floors of this development would continue the current visual pattern of the unsightly garage façade of the University View project, which is located adjacent to the south of the subject site. Since the development is too intense for this site and will not contribute in any sense to the formation of a main street environment, the applicant has requested 11 amendments to the Development District Overlay Zone standards.

Section 27-548.25 (b) 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 detailed explanation of how the proposed project conforms to each development district standard.

- a. 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. Some of the requested amendments to the DDOZ standards were previously approved for other cases in the US 1 Corridor based on the individual situation of each site. However, given the nature of this development scheme and its possible detrimental impact on the main street environment, the Urban Design Section believes that the proposed alternate site and design related development district standards will not benefit the development and the development district and will substantially impair implementation of the sector plan. The amendments that the applicant has requested are as follows:

#### **PUBLIC AREAS:**

##### **P6. Utilities**

- A. **All new development within the development district shall place utility lines underground. Utilities shall include, but are not limited to, electric, natural gas, fiber optics, cable television, telephone, water and sewer.**

**Comment:** The applicant indicates in the justification statement that they will place the new utilities serving the development underground. However, the Planning Board and the District Council in recent approvals have determined that each developer should contribute financially to a systematic effort of undergrounding existing utilities within the US 1 Corridor. The Urban Design Section recommends that this amendment be disapproved because the applicant does not propose to assume their fair share toward this corridor-wide effort.

## **SITE DESIGN**

### **S1. Vehicular Circulation/Access**

- C. The width of entrance drives should be visually minimized, where appropriate, by the provision of a planted median of at least six feet in width separating incoming and outgoing traffic, especially if two or more lanes are provided in each direction.**

**Comment:** The applicant claims that due to a recommendation of the State Highway Administration, the DSP has provided a minimum entrance access width of 30 feet. Staff agrees that the design standard may not be practical on this site. However, even by allowing the narrowest access drive for this site, the development proposal still does not meet the minimum 70 percent frontage enclosure, which is a critical indicator of achieving a main street environment.

### **S2. Parking Areas**

#### **Parking Credits**

#### **W. Parking Credits for Use of Alternative Modes of Transportation**

- 1. Applicant may request from the Planning Board during the site plan review process a reduction in the minimum off-street parking requirements if they provide incentives to encourage use of alternative modes of transportation other than single occupancy vehicles. These alternatives include contributing to the county and/or city ride sharing program, providing private incentives for car-and vanpooling, participating in usage of public transportation programs such as WMATA's Metrochek and MTA's Transitplus 2000, or provision of private shuttle bus service. Verifiable data must be produced that supports the desired reduction in the minimum off-street parking. The reduction shall range between 5 and 20 percent.**

**Comment:** The applicant indicates that the proposed development is a mixed-use project and the developer will provide shuttle bus service and has immediate access to the hiker/biker trail and bridge across the Paint Branch connecting the development to the University of Maryland, and therefore it is justified to award them a 20 percent parking credit. According to the applicant, the required parking is 345 spaces and the provided parking is 433, which is 88 spaces above the minimum required.

The applicant's parking calculation is not correct. For the proposed development, the required parking is 432 spaces. In order to accommodate the required parking, a four-

story parking garage is needed. This is another indicator that the site is overdeveloped. In fact, the application has provided 433 parking spaces and there is no need to request an additional 20 percent parking reduction because the intent of the DDOZ parking standards is to minimize vehicular travel within the corridor.

As far as the mixed-use claim is concerned, this project is not really a mixed-use project as envisioned by the Sector Plan. According to the information provided by the applicant, the total gross floor area other than residential included in this scheme is 13,990 square feet of retail uses. The retail use accounts for only 2.8 percent of the total GFA proposed on this site. The proposed residential use is 59.6 percent and structured parking is 37.6 percent of the total GFA. As a result of this development, a total of 42,482 square feet of existing office space would be removed from this site.

### **S3. Building Siting and Setbacks**

- B. A front build-to line between 12 inches and 12 feet from the ultimate right-of-way shall be established for all buildings or storefronts which are located in the main street (3a and 3b) and town center (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d and 1e) subareas (see Table 16). The build-to line shall be compatible with all storefronts or buildings within an attached row or a group of buildings in a block. The Commercial and Industrial Landscape Strip requirements (Section 4.2) of the Landscape Manual shall not apply. See Type I Street Edge.**

**Comment:** The relationship between the building and the street is critical in achieving a main street environment. This DSP shows about a 21 foot setback from the R-O-W of US 1. Within this 21-foot-wide space, there is a nine-foot-wide terrace in front of the storefronts and an additional 12-foot-wide sidewalk area with planters and sitting spaces. The nine-foot-wide storefront terrace has to be accessed via staircases on both ends. No ramps of any kind that are in compliance with ADA for the handicapped have been provided. This alternate development district standard will not benefit the development and the development district and will substantially impair implementation of the sector plan for achieving a main street environment in this subarea.

- D. Building facades shall occupy a minimum 70 percent of a property's street-facing frontage on US 1 in the main street ( 3a and 3b) and town center ( 1b, 1c and 1d) subareas (measured in linear feet). Building facades in the remainder of the development district shall occupy a minimum of 50 percent of a property's street-facing frontage on US 1. Parking may be provided in front of the building façade only if it is one parking row wide for either parallel or angle-in, short-term parking.**

**Comment:** The minimum frontage enclosure is also an indispensable measure of the main street environment. The DSP provides a 61 percent direct frontage enclosure. However, due to the layout of the site and scale of the development, visually this development will have an additional 250-foot secondary frontage onto US 1. A one-story Koon's auto service facility is located between the proposed 12-story building and US 1. This project would visually impact approximately 360 linear feet of the US 1 frontage and would have less than one third of the frontage with active storefronts. This project will substantially impair implementation of the sector plan for achieving a main street environment in this subarea.



- L. The maximum lot coverage for multifamily dwellings having 4 or more stories shall be 70 percent of the overall net lot area**

**Comment:** The applicant claims that this project is a mixed-use project and therefore is not subject to this standard. As discussed previously, multifamily dwellings and parking garage account for more than 97 percent of the total gross floor area proposed on this site. The proposed development has a lot coverage of 86 percent and a floor area ratio of 5.17. In terms of residential density, if the site were developed as multifamily residential use, the maximum density would be only 40 dwelling units per acre. By exploring the mixed-use option with addition of only 13,990 square feet of retail use, the applicant has achieved a density of 160 dwelling units per acre in this proposal.

#### **S4. Buffers and Screening**

- E. The bufferyard requirements within the development district may be reduced to facilitate a compact form of development compatible with the urban character of the US 1 corridor. The minimum bufferyard requirements (landscape yard) for incompatible uses in the Landscape Manual (Section 4.7) may be reduced by 50 percent. The plant units required per 100 linear feet of property line or right-of-way shall also be reduced by 50 percent. Alternative Compliance shall not be required for these reductions.**

**A six-foot-high, opaque masonry wall or other opaque screening treatment shall be provided in conjunction with the reduced width of the bufferyard between office/retail/commercial uses and residential uses.**

**Comment:** The applicant has requested an amendment to the second part of this standard regarding opaque screening treatment. The applicant states that through the University View development, (which is owned by the applicant) they learned that within the floodplain the proposed opaque fencing creates a blockage and causes the flood waters to rise above the calculated elevations, which would have a negative impact on the surrounding areas. Staff agrees with the applicant. However, a large part of the proposed building will be within the 100-year floodplain. Even though the building will be elevated by pillars, the blockage of the floodwater by the proposed pillars needs to be considered. According to the most recent comments (De Guzman to Zhang) from the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T), the applicant has not submitted a floodplain study for DPW&T to evaluate the real impact of this development on the 100-year floodplain. The applicant has not obtained a waiver from the director of DPW&T for the proposed development to be within the 100-year floodplain. As such, DPW&T will not support approval of this development at this time.

#### **BUILDING DESIGN**

##### **B 1. Height, Scale, Massing and Size:**

###### **Height**

**Maximum height in general is five stories (P201, Sector Plan)**

**Comment:** The sector plan is clear in that the community vision for the Main Street area is for mid-rise (four-to six-story) mixed-use buildings. Specifically, the Building Heights

Map on page 201 of the sector plan indicates that the maximum height, in general, for Subarea 3a is five stories. However, the sector plan in its Economic Development Strategy section reiterates that the redevelopment of this corridor is driven by the market. The sector plan's land use and zoning strategies are aimed to establish a flexible policy and regulatory framework to facilitate market-based decisions by the private sector. In developing height recommendations for the sector plan, the community consensus was expressed along with a recognition that accommodating flexibility in redeveloping this existing commercial strip may require departure from the consensus recommendations, where appropriate, based on design and market considerations. The applicant has provided a market analysis dated October 3, 2006. In a memorandum dated January 8, 2007 (Kowaluk to Zhang), the Planning Department Information Center agreed with the applicant's conclusion that there is sufficient market demand. However, this development scheme does not pass the design consideration test regarding site design, layout, and impact on the streetscape. This alternate development district standard will not benefit the development and the development district and will substantially impair implementation of the sector plan for achieving a main street environment in this subarea.

#### **B1. Height, Scale, Massing and Size Bedroom Percentages**

- N. Bedroom percentages for multifamily dwellings may be modified from Section 27-419 of the Zoning Ordinance, if new development or redevelopment for student housing is proposed and the density is not increased above that permitted in the underlying zone.**

**Comment:** Section 27-419 allows 50 percent of the units to be one bedroom and up to 50 percent of the units to be the two-bedroom units if no three bedroom units are proposed. The applicant has provided 41 percent one-bedroom units and 59 percent two-bedroom units and requested the amendment to this standard to address market demand.

Staff acknowledges that this applicant knows the market very well because this applicant built the residential component of the University View project adjacent to the subject site. The University View project was approved as a mixed-use project with an office and a student housing component. The applicant built the residential component and left an unfinished streetscape along US 1 claiming no market for office. It is because the student housing in University View (352 units) was such a success that the applicant acquired the subject site. Staff has no objection to the amended bedroom percentages per se because the subject project has the same bedroom types (1 BR and 2 BR only) and a very similar bedroom percentage composition (41 percent and 59 percent vs. 45 percent and 55 percent in University View) as the University View project.

#### **B6. Building Services**

- E. Access to a building for services such as deliveries or trash removal should be provided from the rear of a site, whenever possible.**

**Comment:** The applicant believes that the service road concept is not feasible and asks for an amendment to this DDOZ standard. However, the Transportation Planning Section in a memorandum dated September 28, 2007, requests a service road at the rear of this site as a condition of approval. As such, the Urban Design staff believes that this alternate development district standard will not benefit the development and the development district and will substantially impair implementation of the sector plan.

- b. The applicant does not request an amendment to the following standards. However, staff believes that the standards warrant discussion:

**PUBLIC AREAS:**

**P1. Road Network**

- A. Development should, where possible, provide for on-street parking.**

**Comment:** Baltimore Avenue (US 1) is a principal arterial, undivided five-lane section highway. The annual average daily trips passing through this section of US 1 is 32,500 vehicle trips per day. The application proposes no on-street parking. Most of the parking provided will be within the parking garage. Only 11 surface parking spaces are provided on the site away from US 1. The Urban Design Section believes that the proposed off-street parking is better than on-street parking for this site, because traffic volumes on US 1 as currently designed will not permit safe on-street parking.

**P2. Sidewalks, Bikeways, Trails and Crosswalks**

- I. Bicycle parking facilities shall be located in highly visible and well-lit areas.**

- J. The location and number of bicycle racks, lockers and other features shall be determined at site plan review.**

- K. All new retail and office development shall provide a minimum of two bicycle parking spaces per 10,000 square feet of gross floor area. Covered (open-air) bicycle parking spaces should be provided for mixed-use development where feasible.**

**Comment:** No information regarding provision of bicycle parking spaces has been included with this DSP.

**SITE DESIGN**

**S5. Freestanding Signs**

- A. The location of freestanding signs shall not be located closer than 10 feet behind the ultimate right-of-way as modified by Section 27-614(a), Freestanding Signs, in Part 12 of the Zoning Ordinance. In the main street (3a and 3b) and town center (1a,1b,1c, 1d and 1e) subareas, freestanding signs are discouraged and building signs should be used instead wherever possible. Placement of freestanding signs shall not hinder vision or obscure site lines for motorists.**

**Comment:** The applicant proposes a sign package including one monumental sign and building-mounted signs without detailed sign face area calculations. The applicant does not request an amendment to the 10-foot setback for the monumental sign to be placed from the right-of-way of Baltimore Avenue. As discussed previously, the sector plan envisions a main street environment for this subarea. The proposed monumental sign will be placed on the sidewalk, which will interfere with the normal pedestrian flow. Locating the sign as requested by the applicant is not consistent with the sector plan recommendation along this frontage. A building mounted sign will be more appropriate. The staff recommends elimination of the freestanding sign.

### **B3. Architectural Features**

- C. All multifamily building types in a development shall have a minimum of 75 percent of the exterior facades in brick, stone or approved equal (excluding windows, trim and doors).**

**Comment:** The percentage of brick proposed was not included in the application.

9. **Zoning Ordinance:** The DSP application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the Development District Overlay Zone, the requirements of the M-U-I Zone and Part 10B Airport Compatibility of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

- a. Under Section 27-548.26(b)(5), the District Council is required to find that the proposed development conforms to the purposes and recommendations for the development district as stated in the master plan, master plan amendment or sector plan, and meets applicable site plan requirements. The development generally conforms to the applicable site plan requirements. As mentioned in Finding 8 above, the applicant has applied for several amendments to the Development District Standards. The sector plan does not contain a purpose section, but identifies four primary goals under Sector Plan Summary (p.159) to be implemented through the development district standards:

**First, to create an attractive and vibrant gateway corridor leading to The University of Maryland and the City of College Park.**

**Second, to promote quality development by transforming US 1 into a gateway boulevard, main street, and town center in a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environment.**

**Third, to provide a diverse mix of land uses in compact and vertical mixed-use development forms in appropriate locations along the corridor.**

**Fourth, to encourage multifamily development to reduce the use of the automobile and also to expand the opportunity for living, working and studying within the corridor.”**

Under Area and Subarea Recommendations (page 36) of the sector plan, land use and urban design recommendations are provided that establish the preferred mix, type and form of development desired in the six areas and their subareas. For Subarea 3a (page 160), the Sector Plan envisioned the following:

**The vision for this subarea is for redevelopment to emphasize office development in proximity to the university. Pedestrian bridges will provide connections to the university over Paint Branch. A rear service road will improve access and circulation throughout this subarea.**

The proposed development is not consistent with this subarea vision. The subject site is currently occupied by a two-story office building with a gross floor area of 42,438 square feet. The one-story Koon’s auto service building in front of the site is a part of a thriving automobile dealership-Koon’s College Park, which is located immediately across the street from the subject site. To the north of Koon’s College Park is McDonalds. This

section of US 1 is one of the well-maintained segments of the entire corridor that is not in urgent need of revitalization. The DSP proposes 300 one-and two-bedroom units and 13,999 square feet of retail. No office has been proposed. In fact, due to this development, the existing 42,438 square feet of office will be completely razed. The Community Planning Division (Williams to Zhang, June 5, 2007) raises a special concern about the proposed uses as follows:

“...The lack of office uses in the proposal is particularly concerning in light of the plan recommendations to emphasize office development in Subarea 3a to build upon the presence of the University of Maryland...”

- b. The general purpose of the M-U-I Zone is to permit, where recommended in applicable plans (in this case the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*), a mix of residential and commercial uses as infill development in areas that are already substantially developed.

Section 27-546.19. Site Plans for Mixed Uses requires that:

**(c) A detailed site plan may not be approved unless the owner shows:**

- 1. The site plan meets all approval requirements in Part 3, Division 9;**
- 2. All proposed uses meet applicable development standards approved with the Master Plan, Sector Plan, Transit District Development Plan, or other applicable plan;**

**Comment:** The site plan does meet some site design guidelines and development district standards of the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) as discussed in the above findings.

- 3. Proposed uses on the property will be compatible with one another;**
- 4. Proposed uses will be compatible with existing or approved future development on adjacent properties and an applicable Transit or Development District; and**

**Comment:** The application proposed a mixture of multifamily residential and commercial retail in a vertical mixed-use format in a 12-story building with a small frontage on US 1. The proposed 13,990 square feet of retail use occupies the first floor of the small section of the building that is fronting on US 1. The proposed parking for the multifamily section will be in the parking garage located in the building from the first to the fourth floors. The proposed uses on the subject property will be compatible with each other and will be compatible with existing or approved future development on adjacent properties in the Main Street area of the US 1 corridor. However, as previously discussed, the proposed mix of uses and the physical layout are not as envisioned as the sector plan and will not contribute to the main street environment.

- 5. Compatibility standards and practices set forth below will be followed, or the owner shows why they should not be applied:**

- (A) **Proposed buildings should be compatible in size, height, and massing to buildings on adjacent properties;**

**Comment:** The proposed building is compatible in size and height with University View to the north but has a larger mass than the built student housing building at University View. A one-story auto service building which belongs to the automobile dealership across the street is located between the rest of the subject site and US 1.

- (B) **Primary facades and entries should face adjacent streets or public walkways and be connected by on-site walkways, so pedestrians may avoid crossing parking lots; and**

**Comment:** The site plan shows primary facades facing US 1 and a primary entry to the residential section from a turnabout within the middle of the “L”-shaped site. Since the site has a lot coverage of 86 percent, almost every part of the site is connected.

- (C) **Site design should minimize glare, light, and other visual intrusion into and impacts on yards, open areas, and building facades on adjacent properties;**

- (D) **Building materials and color should be similar to materials and color on adjacent properties and in the surrounding neighborhoods, or building design should incorporate scaling, architectural detailing, or similar techniques to enhance compatibility;**

**Comment:** The proposed building is comparable to the residential building on the adjacent University View site. Since the office building on the University View site has not been built yet, staff cannot make a conclusion regarding the compatibility between the two buildings at this time.

- (E) **Outdoor storage areas and mechanical equipment should be located and screened to minimize visibility from adjacent properties and public streets;**

**Comment:** The application does not include outdoor storage. The transformers on the site are located to the north of the turnabout and are screened by a six-foot high fence. However, no fence details have been provided.

- (F) **Signs should conform to applicable Development District Standards or to those in Part 12, unless the owner shows that its proposed signage program meets goals and objectives in applicable plans; and**

**Comment:** A sign package consisting of one monumental sign and several building-mounted signs has been proposed for this DSP. As discussed in the above Finding 8, the staff believes that a building-mounted sign is appropriate for

this section. The proposed monumental sign should be replaced with the building-mounted sign.

**(G) The owner or operator should minimize adverse impacts on adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood by appropriate setting of:**

- (i) Hours of operation or deliveries;**
- (ii) Location of activities with potential adverse impacts;**
- (iii) Location and use of trash receptacles;**
- (iv) Location of loading and delivery spaces;**
- (v) Light intensity and hours of illumination; and**
- (vi) Location and use of outdoor vending machines.**  
**(CB-10-2001; CB-42-2003)**

**Comment:** No information is provided regarding how the proposed retail uses will be operated. Not enough information is available for staff to find conformance of the subject development with the above standards.

- c. The subject application is located within Aviation Policy Area (APA) 6 as defined in Section 27-548.35 of College Park Airport.

The applicable regulations regarding APA 6 are discussed as follows:

**Section 27-548.42. Height requirements**

- (a) Except as necessary and incidental to airport operations, no building, structure, or natural feature shall be constructed, altered, maintained, or allowed to grow so as to project or otherwise penetrate the airspace surfaces defined by Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 or the Code of Maryland, COMAR 11.03.05, Obstruction of Air Navigation.**
- (b) In APA-4 and APA-6, no building permit may be approved for a structure higher than fifty (50) feet unless the applicant demonstrates compliance with FAR Part 77.**

**Comment:** The subject application proposes a 12-story building complex with an approximate building height of 127 feet. The sector plan recommends a maximum of five stories for the subarea where the site is located. The applicant has requested an amendment to the building height standard. Staff recommends disapproval based on design considerations. The applicant has not demonstrated compliance with FAR Part 77 either.

**Section 27-548.43. Notification of airport environment**

- (a) **In all APAs after September 1, 2002, the General Aviation Airport Environment Disclosure Notice, in a form approved by the Planning Board, shall be included as an addendum to the contract for sale of any residential property.**
- (b) **Every zoning, subdivision, and site plan application that requires approval by the Planning Board, Zoning Hearing Examiner, or District Council for a property located partially or completely within an Aviation Policy Area shall be subject to the following conditions:**
  - ...
  - (2) **Development without a homeowners' association: A disclosure clause shall be placed on final plats and deeds for all properties that notifies prospective purchasers that the property has been identified as within approximately one (1) mile of a general aviation airport. The disclosure clause shall include the cautionary language from the General Aviation Airport Environment Disclosure notice.**

**Comment:** No information has been provided to demonstrate that the application meets the above requirements.

10. ***Landscape Manual:*** The 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) have modified the applicable sections of the *Landscape Manual*. In this case, the site plan is subject to residential planting requirements and buffering incompatible uses requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.

- a. Development District Overlay Zone Standards, Site Design, S4, Buffers and screening, Design standards G, requires that residential uses within the development district shall comply with the Residential Planting Requirements of the *Landscape Manual*. Section 4.1 (g) requires a minimum one shade tree per 1,600 square feet or fraction of green area provided for multifamily dwellings. The Landscape Plan has shown the required shade trees.
- b. Development District Overlay Zone Standards, Site Design, S4, Buffers and screening, Design standards E, allows a 50 percent reduction of bufferyard requirements, in terms of the width of the bufferyard and the number of the planting units, in order to facilitate a compact form of development compatible with the urban character of the US 1 corridor. The subject DSP proposes one high-rise building primarily for residential use and is adjacent to the north to an existing restaurant and to the south and the east sides to an existing auto lubrication facility that need to be buffered in accordance with the *Landscape Manual*. The area along the northern property line adjacent to the restaurant requires a Type "B" bufferyard, which requires a minimum 30-foot building setback and a 20-foot-wide landscape strip to be planted with 80 units per 100 linear feet of property line. With the reduction provision of the DDOZ standards, a minimum 10-foot landscape strip and a minimum 15-foot setback are required. The Landscape Plan shows a triangular space between the proposed building and the property line. The building setback from the property line varies from 12 feet to 5 feet and cannot meet this setback requirement.

The areas along the site's south and east sides where the existing auto lubrication facility is located need a Type D bufferyard, which requires a minimum 50-foot building setback



and a minimum 40-foot-wide landscape strip to be planted with 160 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. With the reduction provision of the DDOZ standards, a minimum 20-foot-wide landscape strip and a minimum 25-foot setback are required. The proposed building meets the setback requirement. However, there is no space left to meet the landscape strip width requirement.

- c. Between the building and the section of the internal street that is close to the University View project, the Landscape Plan shows a less than two-foot-wide landscape strip, which is not acceptable. A minimum six-foot-wide landscape strip is required.

- 11. **The Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance:** This property is not subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance because the site contains less than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland, and there is no previously approved Type I Tree Conservation Plan on the subject property. A letter of Exemption was issued on March 17, 2006. The Development District Overlay Zone Site Design Standards requires provision of a minimum of 10 percent tree coverage as follows:

- C. **Afforestation shall be accomplished through the provision of shade and ornamental trees. Tree cover shall be provided for a minimum of 10 percent of the gross site area and shall be measured by the amount of cover provided by a tree species in 10 years. Street trees planted along abutting rights-of-way may be counted toward meeting this standard. Exceptions to this standard shall be granted on redevelopment sites where provision of 10 percent tree cover is not feasible due to existing buildings and site feature.**

**Comment:** The Landscape Plan does not provide the required information.

- 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 Division in a memorandum dated June 5, 2007, indicated that the proposed DSP does not conform to the sector plan's land use recommendation for Subarea 3a, which envisioned "compact development with offices located above ground floor retail to take advantage of technology linkages to the university, vertical, mixed-use development where feasible outside of the floodplain, and establish a vision of a neighborhood main street district with a compact mix of retail shopping, restaurants, and offices." In addition the community planner indicated that the proposed building does not meet the build-to line requirement of the DDOZ, which requires a front build-to line of between 12 inches and 12 feet. The proposed retail component is set back approximately 20 feet with the main portion of the building set back an additional 30 feet beginning at the third story. The community planner questions the applicant's method of determining the build-to line by including the terraced portion of the building and indicates that the current design will lack the feeling of enclosure and the street wall intended by the build-to line requirements. The community planner further indicated the following: the sidewalk treatment does not meet the Type 1 Street Edge requirement of a consistent paving material from curb edge to building face; the applicant's request of a 20 percent reduction in the minimum number of off-street parking spaces is not justified and the parking schedule's declaration that the proposed 433 spaces are 88 spaces in excess of the DDOZ requirements is inaccurate and should be amended; the material and design of the parking structure are inconsistent with the requirements of the development district standards and its visual impact should be further mitigated via the incorporation of high-

quality building materials, redesign of openings and the provision of plant material; the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) has no objection to the proposed building although their determination does not supersede the Federal Aviation Administration's declaration of compliance with Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77; the applicant has failed to address the community planner's second review comments and has not submitted a justification statement addressing all of the development district standards applicable to the subject site.

- b. The Transportation Planning Section in a memorandum dated September 28, 2007, questioned the reported low traffic volumes as reflected in the traffic study. Staff is concerned with the reported corridor-wide average levels of service for the existing, background and total traffic conditions. However, the Transportation Planning Section recommends approval of this DSP with three conditions, one of which is to require the applicant to include the service road concept in the DSP. The applicant has requested an amendment to that design standard.

In a separate memorandum dated January 30, 2007 (Shaffer to Zhang), the trails planner offered a comprehensive analysis of the requirements set forth in the sector plan regarding pedestrian circulation. Staff recommends three conditions if the Planning Board approves this DSP.

- c. In a memorandum dated October 1, 2007, the Subdivision Section concluded that the subject site is exempt from the Subdivision Regulation pursuant to Section 24-107 (c) (7) (D).
- d. The Environmental Planning Section in a memorandum dated November 30, 2006, noted that the DSP does not have information to satisfy the requirements of DDOZ Site Design Standard S6 C for tree canopy coverage. The Environmental Planning Section recommends approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-06037 with three conditions.
- e. In a memorandum dated October 3, 2007, the Permit Section provided 10 comments and questions regarding compliance with the requirements of the *Landscape Manual* parking, loading, and recreation facilities and the permit. Staff also notes that information regarding trash dumpsters and access to them has not been provided.
- f. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) in a memorandum dated June 27, 2007, stated that Baltimore Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the Maryland State Highway Administration; the SHA will determine permit requirements and frontage improvements along Baltimore Avenue for this site. Staff also notes that the site has an approved stormwater management concept plan. However, this memorandum does not discuss anything related to the 100-year floodplain that traverses most of the site.

The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) in an e-mail dated September 28, 2007 (De Guzman to Zhang), indicated that the applicant needs to submit a floodplain study for review and approval because the site is located within the 100-year floodplain. The applicant needs to obtain a waiver approved for the proposed development from the Director of DPW&T. Staff concludes that until the applicant fulfills the above requirements, DPW&T will not be able to support approval of this development.

- g. In a memorandum dated October 1, 2007, the Department of Parks and Recreation provided a discussion on the impact of the development on both College Park Airport and Paint Branch Stream Valley due to their close proximity to the development. The park planner concludes that if the Planning Board approves this DSP, four conditions should be attached to the approval.
- h. In a memorandum dated May 21, 2007, the State Highway Administration (SHA) identified issues related to access to the site from US 1 and indicated the following:

“The proposed development lies within the limits of the US 1 Corridor Upgrade Project and therefore the building setbacks and land dedication must be consistent with the Selected Alternate. A copy of the proposed plan has been provided to our Project Planning Division for review and comment.

“The applicant met with SHA on May 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss possibility of introducing a signal at the intersection of US1 and Pontiac Street. SHA’s District Traffic Section has requested that a Traffic Impact Study and Signal Warrant Analysis be prepared and submitted for review, to determine the conditions under which the intersection will operate at full build out.

“The US1 access point should be shifted further north to be more in line with the alignment of Pontiac Street.

“Pursuant to Maryland State Highway Access requirements the proposed lighting, landscaping, storm drain design and access point depicted on the plan requires a permit issued by SHA. Coordination with Engineering Access Permits is necessary to determine appropriateness of the proposed improvements within state right-of-way.”

The SHA recommends approval of the proposed DSP subject to the above conditions.

At the time this report was written, the Urban Design staff had not received SHA’s comments on the Traffic Impact Study and Signal Warrant Analysis.

- i. In a memorandum dated October 4, 2006, the Research Section agreed with the conclusion of the market study to justify increase in building height that there is sufficient market demand for higher-end rental units on the subject site. The staff also noted that the market study does not include analysis of the retail portion of the project.
  - j. The City of College Park’s comments will be presented at the time of the public hearing for this DSP.
  - k. At the time this staff report was written, neither the City of Berwyn Heights nor the City of Greenbelt had yet responded to the referral request.
13. As required by Section 27-285 (b), the detailed site plan does not represent a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9, of the Prince George’s County Code and the Development District Overlay Zone Standards of the 2002 Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use. The proposed development does not contribute to the creation

of a main street environment as the Sector Plan envisions for this subarea (Subarea 3a). The DSP presents a scheme that is an overdevelopment of the subject site with a lot coverage of 86 percent. The proposed mixed-use development has only 2.8 percent retail uses and more than 97 percent residential uses and is not a true mixed-use project foreseen by the Sector Plan. The proposal does not include any office use and will result in the demolition of approximately 42, 438 square feet of an existing office building, which is still in use, while the Sector Plan recommends an emphasis on office development in this subarea. As a result of the overdevelopment of the subject site, the DSP does not meet the requirements of Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses of the *Landscape Manual* and the DDOZ Standards regarding landscaping along its southern and eastern boundary areas; nor does it meet the minimum driveway width and the minimum width of the required landscape strips. In addition, the applicant does not provide sufficient information regarding the DSP's compliance with the operational requirements of the M-U-I Zone, with the requirements of Part 10B, Airport Compatibility or with other DDOZ standards such as provision of bicycle parking, and tree canopy coverage.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design Section believes that since the above deficiencies of this DSP will necessitate a significant redesign of the entire project, no conditions can sufficiently address the subject DSP proposal in its current design and format. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and DISAPPROVE the DSP application.