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Detailed Site Plan Alternative Compliance

**DSP-07049
 AC-09006**

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Grace's Office Park	Date Accepted:	02/19/09
	Planning Board Action Limit:	04/23/09
	Plan Acreage:	6.99
Location: South side of Lanham Severn Road (MD 564), approximately 4,000 feet southwest of its intersection with Greenbelt Road (MD 193)	Zone:	C-O
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
	Gross Floor Area:	72,400 sq. ft.
Applicant/Address: IPDS, LLC 7245 Hanover Parkway, Ste. D Greenbelt, MD 20770	Planning Area:	70
	Tier:	Developing
	Council District:	03
	Election District:	20
	Municipality:	N/A
	200-Scale Base Map:	209NE09

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
For approval of three commercial office buildings	Informational Mailing:	11/13/07
	Acceptance Mailing	10/26/09
	Sign Posting Deadline:	03/24/09

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-07049, Grace's Office Park
Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/014/09
Alternative Compliance AC-09006

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 with conditions, 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 Zoning Ordinance in the C-O (Commercial Office) Zone and the site design guidelines;
- b. The conditions of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06132;
- c. The requirements of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*;
- d. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance;
- e. 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 detailed site plan (DSP) application is for approval of three commercial office buildings of approximately 72,400 square feet in the C-O (Commercial Office) Zone.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	C-O	C-O
Use(s)	Vacant	Commercial office
Acreage	6.99	6.99
Of which 100-year floodplain	1.61	1.61
Building square footage/GFA	-	72,400
Of which Building 1 (5 stories)	-	53,200
Building 2 (2 stories)	-	9,600
Building 3 (2 stories)	-	9,600

OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Total Parking Spaces	190	202
Of which Surface parking spaces	-	180
Parking garage spaces (15 standards, 7 compact spaces)	-	22
Loading spaces	2	4
Parking details		
Standard parking spaces (9.5'x19')	-	138
Compact parking spaces (8'x16.5')	-	46 (24%)
Handicapped spaces (12'x19')	-	8*
Parallel parking spaces (8'x22')	-	10

Note: *The DSP has provided enough parking spaces for the handicapped. However, since the three buildings are separated from each other, each building should have a minimum of two parking spaces for the handicapped and one of them should be van-accessible.

3. **Location:** The subject site is located on the south side of Lanham Severn Road (MD 564), approximately 4,000 feet southwest of its intersection with Greenbelt Road (MD 193), in Planning Area 70 and Council District 3.

4. **Surrounding Uses:** The property is a linear strip of land between Lanham Severn Road (MD 564) and the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks. Across the right-of-way (ROW) of Lanham Severn Road to the north and northwest are residential properties zoned (One-Family Detached Residential) and R-80 (One-Family Detached Residential); both are one-family detached residential zones for small lots. Across the ROW of the Pennsylvania Railroad to the south and southeast are developed single-family detached subdivisions in the R-R (Rural Residential) Zone and property in the R-O-S (Reserved Open Space) Zone. On both ends of the subject site are properties in the C-O (Commercial Office), I-1 (Light Industrial) and C-M (Commercial Miscellaneous) Zones.

5. **Previous Approvals:** The November 1993 *Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Glenn Dale Seabrook-Lanham and Vicinity (Planning Area 70)* retained this property in the C-O Zone. A Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (4-06132) was approved by the Planning Board for this site on May 10, 2007. The subject site also has an approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 29793-2006-00, which will be valid through July 2009.
6. **Design Features:** The subject site is a linear strip of land between Lanham Severn Road and the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks with a tract depth varying from the narrowest part at 126 feet to the widest part at 180 feet. A stream bisects the site from north to south. There are regulated environmental features surrounding the stream in the middle of the land strip that divide the site into two separate development envelopes. The entire site is isolated from the surrounding properties which are predominantly zoned residential. The two development sites are more than 600 feet away from each other. The smaller western portion of the site will contain one five-story office building (Building 1). The larger eastern portion of the site will contain two two-story office buildings (Building 2 and Building 3). All three buildings are oriented toward Lanham Severn Road.

The five-story building (Building 1) is of contemporary character and is finished with a combination of glass, brick and ceramic tile. According to the applicant, this building is designed as Class A office space. The building elevation consists of a rectangular box composition for the first four stories, with the fifth floor and a standing-seam metal hip roof as a unit. The front elevation of the first four stories is finished predominately with glass coupled with brick-finish vertical divisions. Additional brick finish tops the fourth floor. In addition, ceramic tile bands and opaque glass spandrel panels are applied horizontally to define each floor. The entire fifth floor is set back from the first four stories and is finished with an aluminum window wall system that forms a sharp contrast to the solid brick wall at the top of the fourth floor. The rear elevation facing the railroad tracks has the same design and finishing materials except with an additional floor at the bottom of the building used as a parking garage. The two side elevations reflect the same design composition and finishing materials but with more solid face brick surface compared to the front and rear elevations.

The two two-story buildings (Buildings 2 and 3) are identical and are designed into a more residential vocabulary than Building 1. According to the applicant, those two office buildings will cater to small professional office users. Each building has four bays with two stairs each serving two units. The front elevation shows two cross gable end wall units at both ends with a long porch in between. Access to the office spaces is provided from the porch. A standing seam metal porch roof (the same color as the roof of the five-story building) marks the second floor of the building. The building has a hip roof with fiberglass shingles and is finished primarily with Hardie Plank siding, which is a type of cementitious finishing material. One end wall unit is finished with face brick and the other end wall unit is finished with a brick water table. The rest of the front elevation is clad with Hardie Plank. The rear elevation is similar to the front elevation in terms of finishing materials. One side elevation is finished with brick. The other one is finished with cementitious siding. Since the two side elevations are visible from the Lanham Severn Road, both elevations should be finished with brick. A condition has been proposed to provide a brick finish on the other side elevations for both Buildings 2 and 3 prior to certification.

The three buildings have been designed for different sectors of the commercial office market. Even though the three buildings are included in one DSP, Buildings 2 and 3 have no connection to Building 1 in terms of building style. The only clue to any relationship among buildings is the application of the same type brick in the elevations of the three buildings. The two small office buildings are more sensitive to the surroundings that are predominantly a residential environment

than the five-story building, which does not relate to its context in any obvious way in regard to design, mass, height, color or material. Since the C-O Zone does not have any height or density limit, the five-story building is permitted on this site. In addition, the application of brick on the front elevation of the two small office building seems somewhat arbitrary. No brick is used on the water table of the porch. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to provide a brick finish on the other end wall unit and to decorate the water table of the porch with the same type of brick.

A noise attenuation wall with a fence has been proposed along the site's southern boundary line for Building 1 and the southwest portion of Building 2. However, no detail of the noise barrier has been provided with this DSP. In addition, a dumpster has been shown at the southwest corner of Building 1 with no details provided. No lighting fixture details are included in the DSP either. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to provide these details to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board prior to certification.

No signage information has been provided with this DSP.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the C-O 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 commercial office is a permitted use in the C-O Zone.
 - b. The DSP shows a site layout that is consistent with Section 27-462 regulations regarding building setbacks. The DSP is also in conformance with the applicable site design guidelines.
8. **Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06132:** On May 10, 2007, the Planning Board approved this preliminary plan of subdivision for one lot with 12 conditions. Of the 12 conditions attached to the approval of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06132, the conditions applicable to the review of this DSP warrant discussion as follows:

5. **Development of this subdivision shall be in conformance with an approved Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/60/06). The following notes shall be placed on the Final Plat of Subdivision:**

“This development is subject to restrictions shown on the approved Type I Tree Conservation Plan (TCPI/60/06), or as modified by the Type II Tree Conservation Plan, and precludes any disturbance or installation of any structure within specific areas. Failure to comply will mean a violation of an approved Tree Conservation Plan and will make the owner subject to mitigation under the Woodland Conservation Ordinance. This property is subject to the notification provisions of CB-60-2005. Copies of all approved Tree Conservation Plans for the subject property are available in the offices of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George’s County Planning Department.”

Comment: According to the review by the Environmental Planning Section (Reiser to Zhang, March 18, 2009), this condition has been fulfilled.

6. **The applicant shall provide a standard sidewalk along the subject site's entire road frontage of MD 564, unless modified by SHA.**

Comment: In accordance with the review by the Transportation Planning Section (Shaffer to Zhang, March 27, 2009), a standard sidewalk should be provided along the site's MD 564 frontage and additional sidewalk and connections should also be provided. Four conditions recommended by the trails planners have been incorporated in the Recommendation Section of this report.

10. **Development shall be in conformance with the approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 29793-2006-00 and any subsequent revisions.**

Comment: The DSP complies with this condition.

11. **Any residential development of the subject property, other than one single-family dwelling, shall require the approval of a new preliminary plan of subdivision prior to the approval of any building permits.**

Comment: The DSP contains only commercial office use. This condition is not applicable to the subject DSP.

12. **Prior to the approval of the building or grading permits, a detailed site plan shall be approved by Planning Board for the review of the architecture, landscaping and transportation impacts.**

Comment: The subject DSP has been filed to fulfill this requirement.

9. ***Prince George's County Landscape Manual:*** The proposed development for an office park consisting of three buildings is subject to Section 4.2, Commercial and Industrial Landscaped Strip Requirements, Section 4.3, Parking Lot Requirements, and Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.

- a. Section 4.2, Commercial and Industrial Landscaped Strip Requirements, specifies that in all commercial zones a landscaped strip shall be provided on the property adjacent to all public rights-of-way. The subject site has a long frontage on Lanham Severn Road. The landscape plan has chosen Option 1, which is a ten-foot-wide landscape strip on the subject site along the right-of-way of Lanham Severn Road, and identified the locations of the Section 4.2 strips. However, the Section 4.2 schedule does not show the correct linear feet of the frontage, which results in an incorrect calculation of the plant units. A condition has been proposed in the Recommendation Section to require the applicant to revise the Section 4.2 schedules prior to certification of this DSP.
- b. Section 4.3(a), Landscape Strip Requirements, requires a ten-foot-wide landscaped strip between the parking lot and public right-of-way to be planted with one shade tree and ten shrubs per 35 linear feet of parking lot perimeter adjacent to the right-of-way, among other landscape strip treatments. The landscape plan has shown the locations of the required Section 4.3 (a) landscape strip and complies with the requirements.

Section 4.3(c), Interior Planting, requires a certain percentage of the parking lot to be an interior planting area with one shade tree for each 300 square feet of the planting area. The landscape plan identifies four parking lots which require five percent of the parking lot area to be interior planting areas. The landscape plan has provided the required interior planting areas and the required schedules for all of them. However, the schedule fails to provide the required and provided interior planting area percentage information. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to provide the interior planting area percentage information prior to certification.

- c. The southeast side of the site is adjacent to the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks to the southeast. The railroad tracks are defined by Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual as a high-impact use and the proposed commercial office use is defined as a medium-impact use. According to Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual, a Type B bufferyard is required between the subject site and the railroad tracks. The Type B bufferyard requires a minimum 30-foot building setback, and a minimum 20-foot-wide landscaped yard to be planted with 80 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. The landscape plan provides only a ten-foot wide building setback and landscaped yard. The applicant is seeking Alternative Compliance from the Section 4.7 requirements. The Alternative Compliance application (AC-09006) is under review by the Alternative Compliance Committee at the time of the writing of this staff report. The final recommendation of the Planning Director on the Alternative Compliance application will be presented at the time of the public hearing for this DSP.

10. **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/060/06, for this site.

- a. The site has an approved Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), NRI/113/05, which shows streams, wetlands, and 100-year floodplain on the subject site. All three network features, Regulated Area, Evaluation Area and a Network Gap, have been shown on the *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan*, which are located on the subject site. A Detailed Forest Stand Delineation (FSD) was conducted in August 2006. The Type II tree conservation plan and the detailed site plan show the information correctly from the approved NRI. No additional information is required for this DSP.
- b. Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/014/09, submitted with this application, has been reviewed and found to be consistent with the approved NRI and Type I tree conservation plan and meet the requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

11. **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 March 17, 2009, the Community Planning Division stated that the application is consistent with the 2002 Prince George’s County Approved General Plan Development Pattern Policies for the Developing Tier and is in conformance with the land use recommendations of the 1993 Approved Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for Glenn Dale Seabrook Lanham and Vicinity, Planning Area 70 for commercial office development.
- b. **The Subdivision Section**—In a memorandum dated March 5, 2009, the Subdivision Section noted that the property is the subject of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06132, which is still valid but has not been recorded. The Subdivision Section also identified the applicable conditions that are pertinent to the review of this DSP. See Finding 8 above for a discussion of the applicable conditions attached to the approval of the preliminary plan of subdivision. The Subdivision Section concluded that the subject DSP is consistent with the approved preliminary plan of subdivision.
- c. **The Transportation Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated March 17, 2009, the Transportation Planning Section provided an overview of the applicable transportation related conditions attached to the previously approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-06132. The Transportation Planning Section concluded that the site layout is acceptable.

In a separate memorandum from the Transportation Planning Section dated March 27, 2009, on detailed site plan review for master plan trail compliance, the trails planner noted that the adopted and approved East Glenn Dale sector plan recommends a master plan trail or side path along MD 564. The trails planner recommends a standard sidewalk to be placed along the site’s MD 564 frontage and additional internal sidewalk connections from MD 546 to the sidewalk around buildings and among buildings. The four conditions recommended by the trails planner have been incorporated in this report.

- d. **The Environmental Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated March 18, 2009, the Environmental Planning Section stated that the plan is consistent with the Woodland Conservation Ordinance subject to some technical revisions. The Environmental Planning Section recommended approval of DSP and TCPII with one condition that has been incorporated into the Recommendation Section of this report.
- e. **The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T)**—In a memorandum dated March 11, 2009, DPW&T provided a standard response on issues such as right-of-way dedication, frontage improvement, sidewalks, street trees and lighting, storm drainage systems, and facilities in order to be in accordance with the requirements of DPW&T. Those issues will be enforced at the time of issuance of the access permit. DPW&T also indicated that the subject DSP is consistent with the approved SWM Concept Plan 29793-2006.
- f. **The Permit Section**—In a memorandum dated March 6, 2009, the Permit Section provided seventeen comments and questions regarding the plan’s conformance with the Landscape Manual and the Zoning Ordinance. Most of the comments have been addressed through a revised plan. The rest of the applicable comments including No. 4, 5 of the memorandum have been incorporated into the report as conditions of approval for this DSP.
- g. **Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)**—In a memorandum dated February 26, 2008, DPR provided no comments on this DSP.

- h. At the time the staff report was written, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) had not responded to the referral request.
- i. The Prince George's Health Department in a memorandum dated March 6, 2009, provided no comments on this DSP.
- j. **The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Section**—In a memorandum dated February 26, 2009 the Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Section indicated that the proposed DSP has no impact on existing historic sites, resources or districts.

In a separate memorandum on archeology dated March 4, 2009, the Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Section concluded that Phase I archeological survey is not recommended on the subject site.

- k. **The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department**—The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department provided a standard memorandum dated March 3, 2009 and indicated no issues with this DSP.
- l. **The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**—In a memorandum dated March 6, 2009, WSSC stated that there are WSSC issues concerning this project that need to be addressed. However, since the applicant has not paid for the review fee, the review has not been completed.

Comments: WSSC has its own permit review and approval process that is independent of the County's permitting system. WSSC issues are usually addressed at the time of their permit review.

- 12. As required by Section 27-285(b), 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, Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Detailed Site Plan DSP-07049 for Grace's Office Park, and Type II Tree Conservation Plan TCPII/014/09, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to certificate approval of this detailed site plan, the applicant shall:
 - a. Provide the correct linear frontage information in the Section 4.2 landscape schedule.
 - b. Provide the percentage information for the interior planting area in the Section 4.3 (c) landscape schedule.
 - c. Provide TCPII revisions as follows:
 - (1) Revise the note below the specimen tree table to indicate that the specimen trees have been located according to a survey.

- (2) Provide details on the plan for canopy pruning and root fertilization in accordance with the note below the specimen tree table.
 - (3) Show the type and location of tree protection devices on the plan (fence and signs).
 - (4) Provide details for all tree protection devices shown on the plan.
 - (5) Revise the TCPII notes on Sheet 1 to include standard Note 5 and remove the TCPII notes located on Sheet 4.
 - (6) After all these revisions have been made, have the qualified professional who prepared the plan sign and date it and update the revision box with a summary of the revisions.
- d. Provide sidewalk improvements as follows:
- (1) A standard sidewalk along the subject site's entire road frontage of MD 564, unless modified by SHA.
 - (2) A sidewalk connection from MD 564 to Building 2 along the west side of the entrance road on Sheet 4.
 - (3) A sidewalk connection from MD 564 to Building 1 along the east side of the entrance road and along the parking lot on Sheet 3.
 - (4) Marked crosswalks at both of the ingress/egress points from MD 564 into the subject site, unless modified by SHA.
- e. Revise the front elevations of Building 2 and 3 to provide a full brick finish on the end unit and under the front-facing gable on the water table beneath the porch.
- f. Provide brick finish on the other side elevations of Buildings 2 and 3.
- g. Provide details of the noise attenuation walls, on-site lighting fixtures, and dumpsters on the site plan to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.