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.*

Detailed Site Plan DSP-10028

Application	**General Data**	
Project Name: Maryland Book Exchange **Location:** The east side of Baltimore Avenue (US 1), north of College Avenue and west of Yale Avenue within the City of College Park. **Applicant/Address:** R & J Company, LLC c/o Josef Mittleman PO Box 522 Locust Valley, NY 11560	Planning Board Hearing Date:	12/08/11
	Staff Report Date:	11/23/11
	Date Accepted:	07/14/11
	Planning Board Action Limit:	Waived
	Plan Acreage:	2.71
	Zone:	M-U-I/D-D-O
	Dwelling Units:	341
	Gross Floor Area:	398,693 sq. ft.
	Planning Area:	66
	Tier:	Developed
	Council District:	03
	Election District	21
	Municipality:	College Park
	200-Scale Base Map:	209NE04

Purpose of Application	**Notice Dates**	
The redevelopment of the Maryland Book Exchange site with a single mixed-use building consisting of 341 multifamily residential units and 14,366 square feet of retail space.	Informational Mailing:	09/07/10
	Acceptance Mailing:	07/11/11
	Sign Posting Deadline:	10/04/11

Staff Recommendation			**Staff Reviewer:** Jill Kosack **Phone Number:** 301-952-4689 **E-mail:** Jill.Kosack@ppd.mncppc.org
APPROVAL	**APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**	**DISAPPROVAL**	**DISCUSSION**
		X	

MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan, DSP-10028
Maryland Book Exchange

The Urban Design staff has reviewed the detailed site plan for the subject property and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of DISAPPROVAL.

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

A. Compliance with the requirements of the M-U-I Zone (Mixed-Use-Infill).

B. Compliance with the requirements of the D-D-O-Z Zone (Development District Overlay Zone).

C. Compliance with the requirements of the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*.

D. The *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.

E. The Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance and Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance.

F. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

1. **Request:** The detailed site plan is for the redevelopment of the Maryland Book Exchange site, currently occupied by a single-story structure, with a single six-story mixed-use building consisting of 341 multifamily residential units and 14,366 square feet of retail space.

2. **Location:** The subject property, which consists of ten separate lots, is located on the east side of Baltimore Avenue (US 1), north of College Avenue and west of Yale Avenue within the City of College Park. The site is in Planning Area 66, Council District 3, and is in the Developed Tier. The site is zoned M-U-I and is subject to the Development District Overlay Zone (D-D-O-Z) standards found in the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (SMA).

3. **Surrounding Uses:** To the north, the site adjoins M-U-I-zoned property used by the University of Maryland, specifically by the Pocomoke Building. To the east, the site is bordered by the right-of-way of Yale Avenue, and beyond it are a University of Maryland police substation in the M-U-I Zone and the St. Andrew's Episcopal Church property in the R-55 Zone, both of which are within the Prince George's County Old Town College Park Historic District. To the west, the site is bordered by the right-of-way of US 1, and beyond it by the R-R-zoned University of Maryland main campus. To the south, the site is bordered by the right-of-way of College Avenue, and beyond it by commercial properties in the M-U-I Zone and a sorority house in the R-18 Zone, which is also within the Prince George's County Old Town College Park Historic District.

4. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	**PROPOSED**
Zone(s)	M-U-I/ D-D-O-Z	M-U-I/D-D-O-Z
Use(s)	Commercial	Multifamily Residential/ Commercial/Retail
Acreage	2.71	2.71
Lots	10	10
Square Footage/GFA	32,480	398,693
Multifamily Dwelling Units:	0	341

OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

Bedroom Unit Mix—Multifamily

Unit Type	**Number of Units**	**Proposed Percentage***	**Average Square Footage**
Studio	68	20.0	364
1 Bedroom	10	3.0	450
2 Bedrooms	60	17.5	727
4 Bedrooms	203	59.5	1,209
Total	**341**	**100**	

***Note:** Per the Sector Plan, page 246, "Bedroom percentages for multifamily dwellings as specified in Section 27-419 of the Zoning Ordinance shall not apply within the Central US 1 Corridor development district."

Parking Requirements per the Sector Plan*

Uses	**Spaces**
Residential Use (341 units @ 1 space per dwelling unit)	341
Retail Use (14,366 sq. ft. @ 3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft.)	43
Sub-Total	384
Shared Parking Factor for Retail and Residential = 1.2	
Total Parking Required = 384 spaces / 1.2	**320**
Total Parking Provided	**320** ** **(104 compact; 4 handicapped; 4 van accessible handicapped)**

*__Note:__ Mixed-use developments may use the shared parking factor to determine a reduction in the required number of parking spaces.

**__Note:__ For 320 required spaces, a maximum of 106 spaces may be compact and 8 handicapped spaces are required. The provided parking meets these requirements; however, all of the provided handicapped spaces are less than the required 19 feet in length and one does not have the required adjacent striped access aisle. These issues would have to be corrected prior to any approval of this DSP because handicap spaces must be designed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Bicycle Spaces per the Sector Plan

Required = 1 space per 3 parking spaces	**107**
Provided	**315** (280 interior + 35 exterior)

Loading Spaces

Required (per Section 27-582*)	**3**
Retail – 14,366 sq. ft. (3 stores less than 2,000 sq. ft.; 1 store 2,000 to 10,000 sq. ft.)	1 space
Multifamily - 341 dwelling units	2 spaces
Provided	**3 (interior)**
Retail	1 space
Residential	2 spaces

*__Note:__ The 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (SMA) does not have specific requirements for the number of loading spaces; therefore, the applicable section of the Zoning Ordinance should serve as the requirement per the sector plan (page 226). Additionally, the provided loading spaces need to meet the size requirements of Section 27-578 of the Zoning Ordinance; however, no heights for the loading space access doors were provided. Therefore, any future approval of this DSP should label the height of all loading space access doors as at least 15 feet.

5. **Prior approvals:** Lots 1 through 10, Block 29, Johnson and Curriden's Subdivision of College Park, were enrolled in land records in 1890 (Plat Book A@50). The property is improved with a 32,480 square-foot book store, which was built in 1958. The applicant is not required to file a preliminary plan of subdivision for this property as discussed in Finding 12 d. below. The subject property has an approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan, 28576-2010, which expires November 22, 2013.

6. **Design Features:** The subject property is roughly rectangular in shape and is surrounded on three sides by public rights-of-way, US 1 to the west, College Avenue to the south, and Yale Avenue to the east, and adjacent to the north is the University of Maryland campus. The DSP proposes to develop the property with one six-story, approximately 86-foot-high, mixed-use, retail and residential building that includes two levels of parking, one below grade and one as part of the ground level of the building. The proposed building is located with a full building frontage provided within ten feet of the US 1 right-of-way for approximately 142 feet, within 12 feet of the College Avenue right-of-way for approximately 388 feet, and within ten feet of the Yale Avenue right-of-way for approximately 272 feet. The building is set back approximately 15 to 20 feet from the northern property line, which allows room for a landscaped strip and a walkway providing access to the interior bicycle parking area. The remainder of the site area includes ten- to 20-foot-wide concrete sidewalks, with brick borders, and street trees in a green strip and with grates along all road frontages, along with other planting areas. Benches, bike racks and pedestrian-scaled lighting rounds out the list of provided pedestrian amenities. The site design uses an underground stormwater vault, located under the northwest corner of the building, as the treatment facility for stormwater management.

   The building floor plan includes one below-grade parking level with 176 parking spaces. The ground floor level includes the entire 14,366 gross square feet of retail space, which is located along the US 1 and westernmost College Avenue frontages, with separate entrances for four different tenant spaces, which will include a relocated Maryland Book Exchange store. Behind the retail area is an at-grade interior courtyard, finished with concrete and artificial turf, which has entrances to the retail spaces and connects to a parking area. The parking area includes 144 car parking spaces and 280 bicycle parking spaces and fills the northeast corner of the building footprint. Staff has several concerns about this interior courtyard layout. First, the applicant does not guarantee that the retail space tenants will allow the public to use the rear access doors off of the courtyard; therefore, any public retail customer parking in the garage would have to exit onto Yale Avenue, walk south and then walk west along College Avenue to access the retail tenants. Therefore, with any future approval of this DSP, staff would recommend that a more direct public access be provided from the covered parking area to the retail spaces. Secondly, if the retail space tenants do not allow public access through their doors facing this courtyard, staff is concerned about the intended use and safety of such a space. Without appropriate lighting, surveillance, maintenance and consistent use, this courtyard space could become ill-maintained, unsafe, and a detriment to the overall building. Therefore, any future approval of this DSP should clarify and provide responses to these issues.

   Besides one interior loading space accessed from College Avenue via a metal roll-up door, the remainder of the ground-level building frontage along College Avenue is used for the residential lobbies and associated office, mail, and amenity spaces. The access to the loading space off of College Avenue conflicts with the location of existing on-street parallel parking; any future approval of this DSP should clarify what is to happen to these spaces. The Yale Avenue building frontage at ground level consists of the enclosed parking area and separate metal roll-up doors providing access to parking, a loading space and a separate, combined loading and trash area. The first floor of the building consists of residential units, some amenity spaces, along with two

internal, outdoor, artificial turf courtyards with a small section of permeable paving for resident use. Staff is concerned about the design of these two courtyards, the planned uses, and maintenance and safety measures, especially considering the lack of any vertical or horizontal separation between the courtyard and the surrounding residential unit windows. Without some clear focus of use, safety lighting, access limits and separation from apartments, these courtyards could possibly become areas for activities that are disruptive to other residents. The top four floors of the building contain the remainder of the residential units. No site circulation plan, including vehicular and pedestrian movements, was provided as required by the Sector Plan; therefore, any future approval of this DSP should require the submission of such a plan.

The mostly flat-roofed, six-story building will be faced with a mix of red brick veneer in running bond and Flemish bond patterns; precast stone trim, including bands above the first and second stories and at the base; Hardie panel wall system in various shades of cream and gray; and gray metal paneling, along with aluminum storefront windows. Brick and masonry predominate on the lower four floors on all sides of the building, except along the northern elevation where the brick only covers the first and part of the second floor. The Hardie panel system covers the majority of the upper floors of the building on all four sides. The metal paneling covers the entire upper five floors on each corner and on articulated window bays that are evenly spaced on all four sides of the building. The applicant intends to obtain at least a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Certification, using the LEED for Homes Checklist as submitted with the proposed building and site design. Generally, staff finds the building design on all elevations to be generic, monotonous, and unimaginative. The proposed building is a massive, six-story, block-filling building that will be highly visible from the adjacent university campus and the historic district, due to its height in relation to surrounding structures. Extra attention should have been given to the architectural composition in order to mitigate the massing and volume of the building. More innovative articulation of forms and detailed architectural design on the entire building should be required with any future approval of this DSP.

The main retail entrance area is inset and located two to four steps above sidewalk level, at the corner of the building closest to the intersection of College Avenue and US 1. Black canvas awnings along the retail building frontage and a small portion of sloped roof along the Yale Avenue frontage add some more detail to the building. The ground-floor parking area, where it is adjacent to the Yale Avenue building frontage, is screened by a small planting area and perforated metal panels. Staff recommends that any future approval of this DSP require that these panels be replaced with a more attractive architectural treatment and that proposed plantings be designed to provide more year-round visual interest in order to create a more appropriate screen.

7. **Recreation Facilities:** The DSP proposes a recreational facility package within the new building, including a 4,126-square-foot fitness room and over 3,000 square feet of flexible room space for seminars, media uses, a business center, and study areas. Additionally, there are two artificial turf and concrete outdoor courtyards, totaling over 14,438 square feet, on the second story of the building for residents' use, and another artificial turf outdoor courtyard, approximately 6,693 square feet, on the ground level, interior to the building, with limited access from the garage and retail spaces. These facilities meet the private recreational facilities requirements for the future residents. However, staff has several concerns about the design of the two proposed above-grade outdoor courtyards regarding the intended users, planned uses, maintenance plan, safety measures and possible necessity of a physical separation between the recreation areas and residential unit windows. These issues should be addressed prior to any approval of this DSP.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

8. **The 2010 Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (D-D-O-Z):** The 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* defines long-range land use and development policies, detailed zoning changes, design standards and a Development District Overlay Zone for the US 1 corridor area. The land use concept of the sector plan divides the corridor into four inter-related areas, Walkable Nodes, Corridor Infill, Existing Neighborhoods, and Natural Areas, for the purpose of examining issues and opportunities and formulating recommendations. Detailed recommendations are provided for six distinct areas within the sector plan, Downtown College Park, University of Maryland, Midtown, Uptown, Autoville and Cherry Hill Road, and Hollywood Commercial District. The overall vision for the Central US 1 Corridor is a vibrant hub of activity highlighted by walkable concentrations of pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed-use development, the integration of the natural and built environments, extensive use of sustainable design techniques, thriving residential communities, a complete and balanced transportation network, and a world-class educational institution.

The subject property is part of a "Walkable Node" within the Downtown College Park subarea (see Map 8 on page 62). Walkable nodes are intended for pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented, mixed-use development at appropriate locations along the Central US 1 Corridor. Development should be medium- to high-intensity with an emphasis on vertical mixing of uses. Development within a walkable node should generally be between two and six stories in height.

The sector plan (see Map 8 on page 62) recommends a mixed-use commercial land use for the subject property. Mixed-use commercial land uses are described as "Properties that contain a mix of uses which, on the ground floor of the development, are predominantly nonresidential, including commerce, office, institutional, civic, and recreational uses. These properties may include a residential component, but are primarily commercial in nature." At 14,366 proposed square feet, the non-residential component of the proposed development constitutes just 3.6 percent of the overall development program; however, it constitutes 17 percent of the ground floor of the building, which is approximately 66 percent proposed parking areas.

Section 27-548.25 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board find that the site plan meets applicable development district standards in order to approve it. The development district standards are organized into multiple categories: Building Form, Existing Residential, Architectural Elements, Sustainability and the Environment, and Streets and Open Spaces. However, in accordance with the D-D-O-Z review process, modification of the development district standards is permitted. 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 following standards of the D-D-O-Z warrant discussion at this time. As noted in the discussion, the applicant submits that the DSP meets all of the applicable standards and, therefore, has not requested any modifications to these standards.

BUILDING FORM (page 241)

Step-Back Transitions and Landscape Buffers

Generally, compatible buildings and uses should be located adjacent to each other. However, along historically commercial strips tall buildings often share rear lot lines with residential buildings.

Where corridor infill and walkable node areas are across the street from or share a rear property line with an existing residential area, a stepback transition and/or a landscape buffer shall be required for all new development within the corridor infill and walkable node areas.

Stepback transitions are appropriate where corridor infill and walkable node areas are across the street from existing residential areas. This scenario is illustrated in the top two diagrams on this page, where a block that fronts US 1 is across the street from an existing residential block. The tallest buildings shall be located fronting US 1. The development shall step down through the block to a maximum height of two or three stories facing existing residential development. The top image illustrates the use of a mid-block parking garage that is masked by a residential liner building, while the middle image illustrates a surface parking lot that is similarly screened by townhouse liner buildings.

The applicant has not requested a modification to this standard and provided the following summarized explanation:

> "The zoning governing properties to the east of the property, across Yale Avenue, is R-55. The existing uses are institutional and are not utilized for residential properties. They consist of the City of College Park Police Substation, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and the Episcopal Student Center and associated parking. By Section 27-441(b), a church and its accessory uses are defined as 'institutional' and the student center is defined as 'educational,' not 'residential.' By Section 27-441 (b), the Police Station use is defined as 'public/quasi public,' not 'residential.'
>
> "The zoning governing the land to the south of the property on the corner of Yale Avenue and College Avenue is R-18. This zoning extends west from Yale Avenue 150 feet, where it changes to M-U-I. The existing grandfathered use is for the Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority, which is an activity center for sorority events and houses some of the students in the sorority. This student-focused use is inherently compatible with the student-focused mixed-use of the proposed development. The Sector Plan (page 241) provides that compatible buildings and uses should be located adjacent to each other. The proposed development faces three streets, US 1, College Avenue and Yale Avenue. It is only adjacent to another property on its northern boundary. That property is mixed-use/institutional and the use of the proposed development is compatible with that use of the University owned property on its northern boundary. The proposal respects the existing uses across the streets placing retail on the ground floor across from retail on College Avenue with housing above, and student-focused housing with no retail across from the student-focused sorority and institutional uses on Yale.

"Furthermore, the Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority is zoned for corridor infill and is designated as a walkable node. Finally, the Sector Plan Development Character Map does not refer to the area occupied by the sorority building as 'existing residential.'

"The stepback transition referenced in the above standard, if and where applicable must by the definitions set forth in the sector plan refer to development defined as 'across the street from existing residential areas.' The quoted text is a term defined in the sector plan. As the proposed development is on the border of the sector plan, the properties across from it are governed by the zoning of the existing use. Such zoning does not require a setback on the proposed development. If the sector plan governed properties outside its boundaries, by definition, the existing institutional and quasi-public uses would negate any requirements of the proposed development to 'stepback.' Notwithstanding the above, the proposed building has been designed to be lower, by a full floor in elevation on Yale Avenue, from its height on US 1.

"Last, were the stepback to be 'enforceable,' the proposed maximum height of a building would be governed by the floor to ceiling limitations set forth in the sector plan on page 237 with regard to any stepbacks. Such story limitations are 25 feet for the first floor and 14 feet from finished floor to underside of finished ceiling. Peaked roofs are not limited in height. Thus a three-story building, including two feet of structure between floors, and roof structures, which can reach upwards of 15 to 20 feet, would result in a total structure height of 71 to 76 feet and still comply with overall story restrictions where applicable. The proposed structure has a height at its roof parapet wall of approximately 74 feet."

Staff generally concurs with the applicant's comments about the existing zoning and uses located on the properties across College Avenue and Yale Avenue. However, several issues were portrayed inaccurately by the applicant. For instance, the church and sorority house mentioned above, which is a residence for sorority members, are considered contributing resources within the Old Town College Park Historic District. Based on permit research, the Episcopal Student Center mentioned is in use as a single-family detached dwelling being rented to student interns. Staff concurs that the uses within the proposed building are compatible with the surrounding uses on adjacent properties; however, the standard under discussion deals with Building Form, not uses. Additionally, the term "adjacent," as defined in Section 27-101.01 of the Zoning Ordinance, means nearby, but not necessarily abutting, adjoining, or contiguous. Therefore, all the properties across the public rights-of-way from the property can be considered to be adjacent. Finally, the applicant argues that "existing residential areas" are limited solely to those properties so designated that are located within the sector plan boundaries. The sector plan recognizes the proximity of stable, developed residential areas adjacent to the sector plan boundaries and includes a number of policies and strategies specifically intended to address adjacent communities. Any and all references to existing residential areas in the Sector Plan apply equally to both existing residential properties within the boundaries and residential areas outside the boundaries of the D-D-O-Z.

To summarize, the standard for Step-Back Transitions and Landscape Buffers requires all new development within walkable node areas that is across the street from an existing residential area, to provide a step-back transition such that the development steps down to

a maximum height of two to three stories facing existing residential development. The subject property, along its entire Yale Avenue frontage and the easternmost portion of its College Avenue frontage, is across from residentially-zoned, residentially-used, county historic district properties, but the proposed building retains its six-story height and does not step-back as required. Therefore, the DSP does not conform to this standard as required.

Furthermore, an amendment to this standard, had one been requested, to allow for the six-story building across from existing residential areas, without any step-back, would have been difficult to justify. It appears to the staff that modification of the standard would not benefit the development district and would substantially impair implementation of the sector plan. The large scale and mass of the proposed six-story building is incompatible with the surrounding residential and historic district areas and would have a large, negative visual impact on them.

Approval of this proposed development would establish a pattern of development and a departure from the standards and goals established in the sector plan which would set a precedent that might make it more difficult to require future developments in the area to fully comply with the sector plan, thereby hindering the development district and impairing the implementation of the sector plan.

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

a. The general purpose of the M-U-I Zone is to encourage a mix of residential and commercial uses as infill development in areas which are already substantially developed, where recommended in an applicable plan, as in the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*.

Section 27-546.19(c), 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 not meet all site design guidelines and Development District Standards of the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* as discussed in Finding 8 above.

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 proposes a mixture of multifamily residential and commercial/retail uses in a vertical mixed-use format in a six-story building fronting on US 1, with the commercial/retail spaces at the street level along US 1 and the westernmost portion of College Avenue. 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 within the "Walkable Node" area of the US 1 Corridor Sector Plan, which includes mixed-use, commercial and residential uses.

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 six-story building meets the majority of the size, height, and massing requirements set forth in the sector plan, except for the building step-back transition standard. The majority of existing buildings surrounding the property are two to three stories in height with smaller, more diverse façades. The subject building's height varies little throughout the block, from 86 to 75 feet above grade, and the proposed elevations are monotonous and fail to break down the block-filling building's mass into elements of a scale consistent with the adjacent properties. Therefore, the proposed building is not compatible in size, height and massing to buildings on adjacent properties.

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

Comment: The proposed mixed-use building features entries along US 1 and College Avenue for the retail spaces and entrances into the residential lobbies off College Avenue. Due to the block-filling nature of the proposed building and the enclosed parking areas, no on-site walkways are provided, except for the public sidewalks along the rights-of-way and a sidewalk along the northern edge of the building providing access to the internal bike parking area.

(C) Site design should minimize glare, light, and other visual intrusions into and impacts on yards, open areas, and building façades on adjacent properties;

Comment: The site plan provides details for pedestrian street lights per the sector plan requirements, but does not provide details or a plan regarding building-mounted or other lighting on-site. Therefore, it is not possible to confirm that the proposed design minimizes glare, light and visual intrusion into the adjacent properties. Any approval of this DSP in the future should require demonstration of conformance with this requirement through the submission of a full site lighting and photometric plan.

(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 main proposed building materials include a red-brown brick veneer, a gray metal panel, and a Hardie panel wall system in two shades of cream. Precast bands and a base along with storefront aluminum windows complete the major façade elements. These building materials and colors are generally similar to those on adjacent properties. However, the proposed building design does not incorporate scaling or architectural detailing to enhance the building's compatibility with those on adjacent properties.

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

Comment: The DSP does not propose any outdoor storage areas and all of the proposed mechanical equipment will be internal or located on the roof. Therefore, these areas will have minimum visibility from adjacent properties and public streets.

(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: The submitted architecture provides some basic details regarding the proposed building-mounted signage on-site. No free-standing signage is proposed.

The building-mounted signs are proposed primarily to identify the ground-floor commercial uses in the building along US 1 and College Avenue. Additional building identification and address signs are provided on all the elevations, except the north. The proposed signage is mostly located at the top of the first floor, above the storefront windows and building entrances. The applicant has identified signage envelopes for the tenant signs, and has specified that the signs will be panelized on the façade or block letters and externally lit. Any approval of this DSP should include the submission of a more detailed sign plan with limitations on lettering, size, height and quantity, a consistent use of materials and colors, and standards for illumination that are in harmony with the D-D-O-Z requirements. The proposed building includes a total of 371 square feet of building-mounted signage, which meets the requirement of the maximum gross area of signage as allowed by the sector plan.

(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;

Comment: The applicant indicated that the hours of deliveries will be addressed in the leases with the future retail tenants. In order to address this requirement, any approval of this DSP should include limits to the hours of operations and deliveries in order to ensure minimal impacts on adjacent properties.

(ii) Location of activities with potential adverse impacts;

Comment: No activities with potential adverse impacts are proposed on-site, except for the loading and trash facilities, which are discussed below.

(iii) Location and use of trash receptacles;

Comment: Proposed trash receptacles are located internal to the building, in the northeast corner, behind a vehicle access door. As long as this door remains closed when the trash area is not being accessed, this area should have no adverse impact on adjacent properties. To ensure this, a note should be added to the DSP, that all vehicular access doors shall remain closed except during times of entrance and exiting of vehicles.

(iv) Location of loading and delivery spaces;

Comment: Three loading and delivery spaces are provided internal to the building, screened by vehicle access doors. As long as these doors remain closed when the loading spaces are not being accessed, this area should have no adverse impact on adjacent properties. To ensure this, a note should be added to any approval of this DSP, that all vehicular access doors shall remain closed except during times of entrance and exiting of vehicles.

(v) Light intensity and hours of illumination; and

Comment: The site plan does not provide photometrics for the lighting on-site. Therefore, it is not possible to confirm the impacts of the light intensity and hours of illumination on the surrounding neighborhood.

(vi) Location and use of outdoor vending machines.

Comment: The subject DSP does not propose any outdoor vending machines.

b. The subject application is located within Aviation Policy Area (APA) 6 under the traffic

pattern for the small general aviation 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 six-story building with a maximum height of 86 feet. The proposed building height is inconsistent with the building height restriction of APA-6. However, the DSP was referred to the Maryland Aviation Administration and in a memorandum dated September 30, 2011, that agency stated that, in accordance with COMAR 11.03.05, the proposal is considered to be no obstruction or hazard to air navigation at the College Park Airport.

Section 27-548.43. Notification of airport environment

(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 mile of a general aviation airport. The disclosure clause shall include the cautionary language from the General Aviation Airport Environment Disclosure Notice.

Comment: The above conditions regarding general aviation airport environment disclosure are applicable to this DSP because the proposed mixed-use development includes a residential component. The applicant has provided a site plan note indicating that the subject site is within aviation policy area APA-6 of the College Park Airport.

c. Section 27-548.25(b) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board find that the site plan meets applicable Development District Standards in order to approve a detailed site plan. As discussed in Finding 8 above, this DSP does not comply with all of the applicable D-D-O-Z standards, and does not request any amendments. Furthermore, staff believes that the amendments to development standards that would be necessary for this DSP would not benefit the Development District and would substantially impair implementation of the sector plan.

10. **Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** Per page 226 of the sector plan, if a development standard is not covered in the plan, the applicable sections of the Landscape Manual shall serve as the requirement. Additionally, per page 229 of the sector plan, the provisions of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* regarding Commercial and Industrial Landscaped Strip Requirements (Section 4.2), Parking Lot Requirements (Section 4.3), and Buffering Incompatible Uses (Section 4.7) do not apply within the development district. Therefore, the DSP is subject to Sections 4.1 and 4.9 of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual.*

    a. Section 4.1 requires that a certain amount of planting is provided on the site of any proposed residential use. The correct schedule, demonstrating conformance with the Section 4.1 requirements, is provided on the landscape plan; however, the street trees should be removed from the calculation of trees provided as they are not necessary to meet the requirement.

    b. The site is subject to Section 4.9 of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* which requires that a percentage of the proposed plant materials be native plants. The plant schedule lists the native and non-native plants incorrectly; therefore the Section 4.9 chart demonstrating conformance with the requirement is incorrect. This should be revised to show the correct amount of native plants on-site prior to any future approvals of the plan.

11. **Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance and Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The DSP proposes to redevelop an existing commercial site with a mixed-use project consisting of residential and retail uses. The DSP is subject to the requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, but not the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance.

    a. Subtitle 25 Division 2: Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance—This site is exempt from the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance because it contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland. An exemption letter was issued for this site on April 14, 2011. A tree conservation plan is not required at this time.

    b. Subtitle 25 Division 3: Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance—Section 25-128 of the Prince George's County Code requires a minimum percentage of tree canopy coverage (TCC) on properties that require a grading permit. Properties zoned M-U-I are required to provide a minimum of ten percent of the gross tract area in tree canopy. The overall development has a gross tract area of 2.71 acres and, as such, a TCC of 0.27 acres or 11,805 square feet is required. The submitted landscape plan provides a worksheet stating that this requirement will be addressed through the proposed planting of 22 ornamental trees, 16 evergreen trees and 33 shade trees on-site, for a total of 11,870 square feet of provided TCC.

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

    a. **Historic Preservation Section—**At their October 18, 2011 meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) reviewed the subject application in regard to its relationship to the adjacent Old Town College Park Historic District (66-042), per the requirements of Section 27-281.01 of the Zoning Ordinance. The HPC reviewed

presentations by staff and the applicant, as well as a number of members of the public. At the conclusion of testimony and after deliberation, the HPC voted to forward the following recommendations to the Planning Board:

Historic Preservation Commission Recommendations

(1) The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that because the subject site is already substantially disturbed by long-term development, no archeological investigations are necessary.

(2) The Historic Preservation Commission recommends to the Planning Board that the subject application be denied as incompatible with the character of the adjacent Old Town College Park Historic District and because the application fails to address the requirements of the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (SMA) with regard to the requirements for new and infill construction adjacent to the historic district which has been identified as an existing residential area.

(3) The HPC also recommends that the Planning Board establish a voluntary working group to address potential revisions to the project to enhance its compatibility with the requirements of the *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the adjacent Old Town College Park Historic District and that the working group should include representatives members from R & J Company (the developer), the City of College Park, the University of Maryland, the St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, the Old Town Civic Association, M-NCPPC planning staff, and the Old Town College Park Historic District Local Advisory Committee.

b. **Community Planning North Division—**In a memorandum dated October 10, 2011, the Community Planning North Division offered the following comments:

(1) This application is consistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for Corridor Nodes in the Developed Tier and does not violate the General Plan's growth goals for the year 2025, based upon review of Prince George's County's current General Plan Growth Policy Update.

(2) This application does not conform to the land use recommendations of the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* for mixed-use commercial land uses in a walkable node. The 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* recommends mixed-use commercial land uses on the subject property (see Map 8 on page 62 of the sector plan). Mixed-use commercial land uses are described as "Properties that contain a mix of uses that are predominantly nonresidential, including commerce, office, institutional, civic, and recreational uses. These properties may include a residential component, but are primarily commercial in nature." At 14,366 proposed square feet, the non-residential component of the proposed development constitutes just 3.6 percent of the overall development program.

(3) This application incorrectly identifies the subject site as being in the University of Maryland Walkable Node. The proposed development is located in the Downtown College Park Walkable Node as shown on Map 8 on page 62 of the

sector plan. Walkable nodes are intended to be hubs of pedestrian and transit activity emphasizing higher density mixed-use development at appropriate locations along the Central US 1 Corridor, and should be directly and uniquely influenced by adjacent neighborhoods, with regard to building height, scale, and type tailored to the existing businesses and residents, while accommodating desired growth and change (page 44). Walkable node development should consist of buildings between two and six stories in height (pages 69 and 237).

(4) This application does not meet key Development District Standards intended to preserve and enhance the character of existing residential neighborhoods adjacent to designated Walkable Nodes.

(5) There are significant concerns with regard to the form and massing of the proposed development and its relationship to existing residential neighborhoods, in this case the county-designated Old Town College Park Historic District, a stable community of single-family detached dwelling units and fraternity and sorority houses. Policy 4 on page 66 applies throughout the Central US 1 Corridor, and states "ensure that development in the Central US 1 Corridor does not adversely impact the character of existing residential neighborhoods."

(6) Strategy 1 of Policy 4 on page 66 calls for a "transition in building density and intensity from more intense uses within the walkable nodes and corridor infill areas to less intense uses within and adjacent to residential neighborhoods." While the proposed application provides for some transition in uses from retail along US 1 to multifamily along Yale Avenue, the building density and intensity does not change through the block.

(7) Strategy 5 of Policy 4, on the same page, intends to "ensure that redevelopment of Downtown College Park does not adversely impact the properties located within the Old Town College Park Historic District." Because the proposed development does not provide a transition in form and density through the block from US 1 to Yale and College Avenues (the borders of the historic district), the proposed development will have an adverse impact by locating a development nearly 30 times more dense than the average density of the Old Town College Park Historic District (approximately 4.2 dwelling units per acre, generally in the R-55 Zone) in a form that visually dominates and overwhelms the historic resources of the district.

(8) Policy 3 on page 70, which applies to walkable nodes, states: "Create appropriate transitions between the higher-intensity walkable nodes and existing residential neighborhoods." The strategies of this policy envision both two to three-story transitions via townhomes or small apartment buildings between new development in walkable nodes and existing residential neighborhoods, and a similar level of detail in these transitions, as within the walkable nodes, to enhance quality of development and preservation of existing community character. The College Avenue and Yale Avenue elevations of the proposed building, when viewed in context with the form and architectural details of the adjoining, existing historic residential neighborhood, do not create a harmonious transition.

(9) The sector plan vision for transitions to existing residential areas and the intent to preserve these communities are enforced via Development District Standards for step-back transitions and landscape buffers on page 241. Where a walkable node area is across the street from an existing residential area (e.g. Old Town College Park), a step-back transition and/or a landscape buffer shall be required for all new development in the walkable node area. Development shall step down through the block to a maximum height of two or three stories facing existing residential development. The proposed development does not incorporate this required step-back transition. It should be noted that this detailed site plan application does not incorporate a request to amend this standard.

Building Transition Requirement
Additional discussion of the applicant's statement of justification with regards to the requirement for building step-backs and transitions is warranted. First, staff understands that the use and occupancy permits in place for properties to the east and south of the subject property, across Yale Avenue and College Avenue, reflect residential uses. Staff also understands the Episcopal Student Center on Yale Avenue houses five residents, and is residential in nature. Therefore, the applicant's position that their site is exempt from the transition and step-back requirements because the site is not adjacent to an existing residential area is inaccurate.

The applicant incorrectly notes the Alpha Omicron Pi sorority house on College Avenue is "zoned for corridor infill." This property is within the Downtown College Park Walkable Node per Map 8 on page 62, not the corridor infill area, and the zoning has no direct bearing on the character area designation. The sorority house was retained in the R-18 Zone by the 2010 *Sectional Map Amendment*, and is within the Development District Overlay Zone (D-D-O-Z).

The applicant seems to argue that existing residential areas are limited solely to certain properties located within the sector plan boundaries that are designated within the "Existing Residential" character area. This argument reflects a misunderstanding of the purpose and intent of the sector plan with regard to both "designated" existing residential areas *within* the sector plan boundaries and the treatment of existing residential areas *immediately adjacent to, but outside*, the sector plan boundaries. In short, there is no difference in intent, vision, or approach in the treatment of the sector plan with regard to existing residential areas or neighborhoods. The sector plan recognizes the proximity of stable, developed residential areas, adjacent to the sector plan boundaries, and as discussed above, includes a number of policies and strategies specifically intended to address adjacent communities. Any and all references to existing residential areas apply equally to both existing residential locations within the boundaries and residential areas outside the boundaries of the D-D-O-Z.

Subject Site Location
The applicant incorrectly identifies that the location of the subject property is within the University of Maryland Walkable Node. The subject property is located in the Downtown College Park Walkable Node per the approved Land Use South Map on page 62. Staff also notes the current book store has a College Avenue address.

The pedestrian safety and comfort recommendations and other appropriate recommendations on pages 82–83 of the sector plan should be incorporated in the design of the proposed development, and the applicant's statement of justification should be re-

written to incorporate the correct walkable node designation.

Architectural Design
The architectural design of the proposed development, as seen in the submitted elevations, does little to enhance the experience of the pedestrian at ground level or to enhance the overall architectural character of Downtown College Park. The applicant should be encouraged to revise the architectural designs in accordance with the sector plan recommendations and the Development District Standards on pages 247–248 to incorporate a stronger expression line, more varied storefront facades, additional pedestrian-scaled architectural detailing, and a more innovative approach to massing and façade articulation along the major public facades of the building, perhaps with different rhythms in the bays, additional façade plane recesses, and similar techniques.

Stormwater Management and Environmental Site Design (ESD)
Staff is concerned with the incorporation of artificial turf in the courtyard areas of the proposed development, and is unclear how the design of these spaces will contribute to ESD to the maximum extent practicable or how they will facilitate the Sustainability and the Environment Development District Standards on pages 258–259. While the applicant will clearly minimize lawn or turf areas by providing artificial surfaces, the potential impacts that the artificial turf may have on the local microclimate (e.g. heat island effect of artificial grasses), drainage, and on-site treatment of stormwater should be further reviewed.

Structured Parking
Staff concurs with the applicant's justification statement regarding the placement of the integrated parking structure on the subject property. The calculation of required parking using the shared parking factor is also correct if one rounds down a remainder of 0.098 of a parking space. However, the site plan seems to indicate the possibility for 12 on-street parking spaces on the north side of College Avenue—these spaces appear "grayed out" on the proposed site plan but are not explicitly removed or provided. If these spaces are provided, the proposed application will exceed the number of parking spaces permitted for the site by 12 spaces, which would necessitate an amendment to the Development District Standards.

Amenities and Public Space
While the applicant is not specifically required to provide for public amenities and open space by the requirements of the sector plan and Development District Standards, this application does not further the sector plan goals, policies, and strategies to promote plazas and pocket parks as gathering places for neighborhood events, community well-being and exercise. Several amenity areas are proposed, but none are available for public use.

LEED Scorecard
The submitted leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED) for Homes scorecard suggests the applicant is not providing a garage or has designated the integrated parking structure as "detached garage or no garage" for purposes of achieving three points for IEQ factor 10. Since the proposed development clearly incorporates an attached parking structure, the applicant should explain this point in more detail.

The applicant should be encouraged to explore measures to better implement the Energy and Atmosphere element of LEED for Homes, as this category has potential benefits such as reduced operating costs and improvements to the local environment.

c. **Transportation Planning Section—**In a memorandum dated October 17, 2011, the Transportation Planning Section offered the following comments:

With the proposed site plan, the applicant has submitted for review a revised comprehensive traffic analysis, dated September 7, 2011. In the submitted traffic impact study, it is reported that the proposed replacement of the existing bookstore in a smaller footprint (9,991 gross square feet vs. 32,480 gross square feet), the construction of 1,010 college student beds in 341 residential student housing units, and 4,375 additional square feet of commercial retail will generate 141 (36 in, 105 out) and 192 (111 in, 81 out) vehicle trips during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. The reported number of vehicle trips for either peak is based on utilization of trip generation rates obtained from the existing student housing building on US 1 (8204 Baltimore Avenue). The recommended rates are substantially lower than the trip generation rates recommended for residential uses by the "Guidelines for the Analysis of the Traffic Impact of Development Proposals" (*Guidelines)*. Staff agreed with the calculated trip generation rates for the proposed student housing, since it was done in accordance with a procedure outlined by staff and because the *Guidelines* do not recommend any specific trip generation rates for student housing. The AM and PM peak-hour trip totals include the recommended reduction for pass-by trips for the proposed commercial uses (60 percent).

In addition to the site's generated traffic, the traffic impact study includes the calculated annual growth of one percent per year for through traffic for US 1, and the projected AM and PM peak-hour traffic impact of all approved, but not yet built or occupied development applications within the study area.

This study was referred to the State Highway Administration (SHA) and the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) for their review and comments. The DPW&T and SHA staff concurs with the traffic impact study conclusion that the impacted transportation network and the proposed access configuration would be adequate in serving the proposed development.

The calculated average critical lane volumes (CLV)/ levels of service (LOS) under existing, background, and total traffic for the AM and PM peak periods for the US 1 corridor between Campus Way / Paint Branch Parkway and Guilford Road are reported below:

Study Period	**Existing Traffic CLV / LOS**	**Background Traffic CLV / LOS**	**Total Traffic CLV / LOS**
AM peak Period	631 / A	752 / A	772 / A
PM peak Period	865 / A	1016 / B	1057 / B

The minimum acceptable average CLV/ LOS for any of the three corridor segments per the approved and adopted adequacy standards of the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* is 1600 /E.

Conclusions

Based on the preceding findings, the Transportation Planning Section concludes that existing transportation facilities will be adequate, as required by the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, to serve the proposed redevelopment of the site as shown on the submitted detailed site plan, if the approval is conditioned on the following:

(1) The total development on site shall be limited such that they generate no more than 141 AM and 192 PM peak-hour trips, respectively.

(2) Prior to the issuance of any building permits within the subject property, the following improvements shall (a) have full financial assurance, (b) have been permitted for construction by the SHA for part (a), and the city of College Park for (b), and (c) have an agreed-upon timetable for construction with the SHA and the City:

(a) The provision of any traffic signal modifications, pedestrian/ bike push buttons and count-down displays at all approaches, and inclusion of highly visible and well-delineated pedestrian cross walks and stop bars on all approaches at the intersections of US 1 with College Avenue/ Regents Avenue, per the SHA and the City of College Park Standards.

(b) The provision of wide pedestrian cross walks on all approaches of College Avenue with the proposed Driveway on College Avenue and the intersection of College Avenue with Yale Avenue, if deemed necessary by the City of College Park.

Comment: The recommended conditions will be included in any approval of this DSP.

d. **Subdivision Review Section—**In a memorandum dated August 8, 2011, the Subdivision Review Section offered the following comments:

Section 24-111 of the Subdivision Regulations provides for exemptions from the requirement of filing a preliminary plan of subdivision for parcels with a record plat. Specifically, in this instance the property is subject to Section 24-111(c) (4) which provides:

(c) A final plat of subdivision approved prior to October 27, 1970, shall be resubdivided prior to the issuance of a building permit unless:

(4) The development of more than five thousand (5,000) square feet of gross floor area, which constitutes at least ten percent (10%) of the total area of the site, has been constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991.

The property was enrolled in land records in 1890. The total property land area is 118,048 square feet and the existing development gross floor area (GFA) on the property is 32,480 square feet (27.51 percent of the total land area). Based on aerial photographs of the site, the existing structure has been in existence since prior to 1991. The site is

exempt from the requirement of filing a preliminary plan of subdivision under Section 24-111(c)(4) based on the existing conditions and structures reflected on the site plan provided by the applicant and available information found on PG Atlas. There are discrepancies for the total site acreage and the square footage of the existing building between the site plan, statement of justification, and the Letter (La Rocca to Hirsch) dated August 9, 2010. The applicant needs to resolve these discrepancies. The site still meets the exemption pursuant to Section 24-111(c)(4) of the Subdivision Regulations based on all three sources of information.

The site is exempt from a preliminary plan of subdivision; however, the proposed development is a change in the use of the site from a major commercial use to a residential-retail use. Residential developments are subject to different adequacy findings than commercial developments. The proposed 341 multifamily dwellings are subject to a public safety surcharge ($2,317 per unit in the Developed Tier, or $790,097 for the site) at the time of building permits because there is no preliminary plan of subdivision approved for this site. There are no exemptions for the public safety surcharge, but Prince George's County may grant a waiver for the surcharge.

To ensure that the preliminary plan exemption will apply to the future development of the site if the applicant proposes to raze any existing structure in the future, staff would recommend that the applicant file a final plat for the site in accordance with Section 24-108 of the Subdivision Regulations, for which no preliminary plan is required. The final plat should include a note to vest the exemption from filing a preliminary plan pursuant to Section 24-111(c)(4) as described above.

The Subdivision Review Section recommends the following notes be added to the detailed site plan:

(1) The site is exempt from a preliminary plan pursuant to 24-111(c)(4), plat to vest is recommended.

(2) A Public Safety Surcharge is required per dwelling unit.

The Subdivision Section recommends the following conditions for Detailed Site Plan-DSP-10028:

(1) Prior to approval of building permits, the applicant, heirs, successors and/or assigns shall obtain approval of a final plat pursuant to Section 24-108 of the Subdivision Regulations for which no preliminary plan is required to vest the existing development and address the following:

(2) Add a note to state that the subject property is exempt from filing a preliminary plan pursuant to Section 24-111(c)(4).

(3) Show the dedication of right-of-way along Baltimore Avenue and Yale Avenue as reflected on the approved DSP.

(4) Add a note to state that the Public Safety Surcharge is applicable for the subject property pursuant to Section 10-192.11(a) of the Prince George's County Code.

(5) Add a note that the development of the subject property shall be in accordance with the approved DSP.

There are no other subdivision issues at this time.

Comment: The recommended notes have been added to the DSP as requested. The recommended conditions would be included in any approval of this DSP.

e. **Trails—**In a referral dated October 17, 2011, the Trails Coordinator offered the following summarized comments:

> The property is located on Baltimore Avenue (US 1). Adequate sidewalk and crosswalk facilities are shown on the submitted detailed site plan. The proposed sidewalks range in width from14 and 20 feet. Barrier-free pathways and sidewalks that will accommodate the handicapped will be constructed. The crosswalks, striping and pavement treatments appear to be adequate for the proposed use and do not conflict with the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the approved D-D-O-Z street sections. The D-D-O-Z street section is described as section "5A" in the sector plan. The D-D-O-Z requires a minimum sidewalk width of 12 feet and a curb radius of ten feet. The sidewalk widths appear to be adequate, but the curb radius of ten feet may not be achievable because of SHA minimum standards for curb radius at signalized highway intersections. The proposal does not conflict with the requirements of the D-D-O-Z and the recommendations of the sector plan in terms of pedestrian and bicycle amenities.
>
> **Bicycle Parking**
> The development district standards contain some requirements for the provision of adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities and those facilities specifically designated for the US 1 corridor. The D-D-O-Z requires that one bicycle parking space be provided for every three vehicle parking spaces provided as part of a development application. The DSP does not conflict with the D-D-O-Z as it includes 320 vehicle-parking spaces and 315 bicycle parking spaces. Details of the bicycle parking spaces have been provided for the 35 exterior bicycle parking spaces and these details appear to be adequate for the proposed use. The bicycle parking spaces are conveniently located on the site. The bicycle parking will encourage and facilitate bicycle travel as is recommended by Policy 2 on page 143 of the sector plan.
>
> **Facilitating Cyclists**
> The 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* contains policies related to cycling and recommends strategies such as providing paths, on- and off-street dedicated bicycle facilities, walkable street design, and bicycle parking. The subject proposal does not conflict with these policies and it provides amenities such as bicycle parking, and wide, uninterrupted sidewalks. The proposal also includes sufficient property area for the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to develop planned bicycle facilities along Baltimore Avenue (US 1).

Recommendations

Previously, the transportation planning staff recommended that the plan be revised (see preliminary comments dated August 2, 2011). The applicant has addressed these comments, and the resolution to each issue is provided below with references to the sections of the approved Development District Standards contained in the sector plan and D-D-O-Z:

(1) The sector plan recommends that off-road, single-direction, cycle tracks be provided at the subject property frontage along US 1 in the location between the curb and the building. SHA has planned on-road bicycle lanes that differ from the cycle track concept approved in the Sector Plan. The proposal includes building-to-curb dimensions ranging from 27 to 34 feet in width. These widths appear to be adequate for the proposed use and will allow future cycle track development as is recommended in the sector plan. The cycle tracks may be constructed by the SHA, but SHA's current plan includes on-road bicycle lanes, and the subject proposal includes sufficient road area for on-road bicycle lanes.

(2) Staff had previously noted that there is only five feet of available landing from the top of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramp to another ADA ramp into the building and portico. The DSP has been revised by the applicant to include 7.7 feet from the top of the ADA curb ramp to the other ramp into the building and portico. This has increased the space for pedestrian flow.

(3) Staff had requested a reduction in the curb radii along College Avenue at US 1. The applicant states that what is provided is the minimum that SHA will allow. Staff had also requested that the applicant install a "curb extension" on College Avenue to shorten the distance for a pedestrian to cross College Avenue. Four new on-street metered parking spaces could then be added to College Avenue. The proposal has not been revised, but the applicant is on the record stating that the plan will "conform to SHA requirements."

(4) Staff recommended that the applicant construct pedestrian countdown signals contained in the *Maryland SHA Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guidelines* because the sector plan describes the subject property as being located in the approved "walkable node" section of the US 1 corridor. This section of the corridor is recommended for tall buildings over four stories in height, located along the street to create viable pedestrian environments. The sector plan contains a "Walkable Streets" section (page 128) that describes recommendations for the walkable nodes. The District Council added a specific strategy on page 129 of the sector plan, which specifically recommends to "Provide well-designed, safe street crossings at all intersections for pedestrians to cross US 1 and other major streets. Ensure these crossings are located for maximum convenience, include pedestrian safety amenities such as count-down crossing lights, and allow for sufficient crossing time." (Amendment 26, CR-50-2010).

(5) Older pedestrian countdown signal crossings currently exist at the intersection of US 1 and College Avenue. The applicant has provided sufficient right-of-way for the state improvements and wide sidewalks ranging in width from 14 to 20 feet. Because SHA has started a series of improvements for the US 1 corridor, including convenient and safe pedestrian crossings, no new recommendations are provided by staff. Staff had recommended that the applicant install a pushbutton-integrated system that has a speaker and vibrating surface or arrow at the pedestrian button. The SHA is currently upgrading the subject section of US 1 and new modern pedestrian crossings will be considered and ultimately, improvements to the crossings may be made by the SHA.

(6) Staff recommended that the applicant construct "Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS)" on College Avenue. It has not yet been determined by SHA as to whether or not these countdown signals are necessary. The City of College Park owns and maintains this section of roadway, and the City is not requesting that countdown signals be placed at this location.

(7) Staff recommended that the applicant consider in-street pedestrian crossing signage (Standard MUTCD R1-6A) on US 1. This recommendation will be reviewed by SHA as part of the construction improvements along US 1 and should not directly affect this application.

(8) Staff recommended that the applicant install the City of College Park's way finding signage. The City has not provided comments on this request.

(9) Staff recommended that the applicant install bicycle parking signage (Standard MUTCD S D4-3) in the US 1 right-of-way. This will require SHA approval, and the applicant has indicated that they will conform to SHA requirements. The bike parking within the building is private.

Conclusion

Based on the preceding analysis, the Transportation Planning Section concludes that adequate bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities exist to serve the proposed use if the DSP were to be approved.

f. **Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)—**At the time of writing of this technical staff report, DPR has not offered comments on the subject application.

g. **Permit Review Section—**On August 11, 2011, the Permit Review staff provided comments to the applicant regarding the DSP. These comments address site plan notes with the submitted site plans.

The Community Planning staff indicated that the applicant needed to revise the notes on the cover sheet of the site plan to reflect the subject property in Character Area WN, Walkable Node, rather than "5a Walkable Node." The applicant's response was that they conducted a review of legislative amendments to the plan at the time of formal approval, and no change was necessary.

However, the District Council's approval of the sector plan by County Council Resolution CR-50-2011 authorized staff to "make appropriate text and map revisions to correct identified errors and inconsistencies, reflect updated information and revisions, and incorporate the zoning map changes reflect in this Resolution." Pursuant to this direction, the alpha-numerical designation of character areas will be removed in favor of referencing that is easier for readers to understand. Staff proposes that the character area "5a" designation be replaced with the abbreviation "WN," for "walkable node."

h. **Environmental Planning—**The Environmental Planning Section provided the following analysis of the subject application:

(1) The site has a signed Natural Resource Inventory (NRI-019-10). There are no regulated environmental features or woodlands on the site. The site is currently developed with an existing building, surface parking, and landscaping. The existing features are correctly shown on the plan.

(2) The site has an Approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan and Letter (28576-2010-00). According to the approval letter, the site is required to address water quality through infiltration and underground storage. According to the plans and letter, the site is providing infiltration through green roof systems in the proposed courtyard areas and porous concrete sidewalks.

i. **The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T)—**In a memorandum dated July 27, 2011, DPW&T offered the following comments:

(1) The property is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of College Avenue and US 1. This site does not impact any county-maintained roadway. Coordination with the City of College Park is required. US 1 is a State-maintained roadway; therefore, coordination with the Maryland State Highway Administration is required.

(2) The DSP is consistent with approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 28576-2010, dated November 22, 2010.

j. **State Highway Administration (SHA)—**In a letter dated August 2, 2011, the State Highway Administration offered the following comments:

(1) The right-of-way dedication along US 1 property frontage as shown on the development plans is acceptable; please note that truncations (right-of-way flares) and right-of-way dedications/donations need to be in accordance with the Master Plan of Highways. The SHA will require that right-of-way dedications/donations be platted to SHA standards.

(2) Upon approval of the Traffic Impact Study (TIS) from The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), the SHA will require six copies of the TIS for review and comment.

(3) Limited work within the SHA right-of-way, such as construction of sidewalks, sidewalk ramps, or any utility connections/abandonments will require a permit from the SHA, District 3.

k. **Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA)—**In a letter dated September 30, 2011, the Maryland Aviation Administration offered the following:

(1) The Maryland Aviation Administration has received the Federal Aviation Administration Form 4760-1 in regard to the referred Maryland Book Exchange, Detailed Site Plan DSP-10028, near College Park Airport, a Maryland licensed public-use facility located in College Park, Maryland.

(2) Based on the information received, MAA determines the proposed structure lies beneath the Horizontal Surface at College Park Airport by 44 feet. In accordance with COMAR 11.03.05, Obstructions to Air Navigation, the proposal is considered to be no obstruction or hazard to air navigation at College Park Airport.

l. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)—**At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, WSSC has not offered comments on the subject application.

m. **Verizon—**At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, Verizon has not offered comments on the subject application.

n. **Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)—**In an e-mail dated July 20, 2011, PEPCO indicated that they required a ten-foot public utility easement (PUE), free and clear of obstructions.

o. **University of Maryland—**In a memorandum dated October 14, 2011, the University of Maryland offered the following comments on the subject application:

(1) The subject application is located directly across from the campus' South Gate; therefore, the quality of this project is important to the University, and it is in that context that we offer the following comments.

(a) We are pleased that the project plans include housing for graduate and international students and visiting faculty, and recommend that the retail component address community needs for complimentary retail and neighborhood services.

(b) The University Campus is considered by the State of Maryland to be an Eligible Historic District, dictating high standards for the urban design, architecture and sustainability of neighboring properties. The architectural drawings included in the DSP package fall short of this expectation.

(c) To address urban and architectural design concerns of the University and community, we propose that a committee, consisting of City, community and University representatives provide ongoing input to the developer's team as the design is further developed. University representation would be by select members of the Architectural and Landscape Review Board; College Park representation might be Planning and Development staff; and community representation by the Advisory Planning Commission.

(2) Our detailed review of the site plan raised two technical issues:

(a) An existing storm drain within the site ties to the campus storm system, discharging at a University outfall which is part of the University's Discharge permit with the State. The proposal to tie the project's stormwater vault to the campus system in order to manage storm drainage for the project is unacceptable.

(b) There is a discrepancy between the site plan property lines and the University's boundary description that requires reconciliation. To address the technical issues, the University is available to work directly with the developer's design team.

Comment: The University's concerns would be included in any approval of this DSP.

p. **City of College Park—**The City of College Park held a work session to consider the proposed plan on October 4, 2011. On October 11, 2011, the City Council of College Park voted 6-1-1 to recommend disapproval of the subject application based on the City Staff report dated September 30, 2011 and summarized as follows:

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

(1) The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for Detailed Site Plans found in Section 27-281.01 and Section 27-285(b);

(2) The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for Mixed Use Zones found in Section 27-546.19; and

(3) The Goals, Principles and Policies and Development District Standards contained in the 2010 *Approved Central US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*.

The recommendation for disapproval is based on the failure of the detailed site plan to comply with the following:

(1) Section 27-281.01 of the Zoning Ordinance, which requires that for property adjacent to a Historic District, the Detailed Site Plan shall address building siting, setbacks, height and massing, building materials, façade treatments and architectural expression, landscaping, fences and walls, accessory structures, lighting, paving materials, and signs to ensure that the development complements the character of the Historic District.

(2) Sections 27-546.19(b)(3), (c)(4) and (c)(5) of the Zoning Ordinance, which requires the applicant to provide a statement and demonstrate that all proposed uses will be compatible with existing or approved future development on adjacent properties and also requires that the proposed development meets the standards for compatibility with respect to the size, height and massing; building materials, color and design;

appropriate scaling and architectural detailing; and minimization of adverse impacts on adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood, including the hours of operation of deliveries and the location of loading and delivery spaces.

(3) Sector Plan Development District Standards for Building Form, specifically Building Height and Step-back Transitions, that requires the development to step down through the block to a maximum height of two or three stories facing existing residential areas.

q. **Town of University Park—**At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, the Town of University Park has not offered comments on the subject application.

r. **Town of Berwyn Heights—**At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, the Town of Berwyn Heights has not offered comments on the subject application.

s. **City of Hyattsville—**At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, the Town of University Park has not offered comments on the subject application.

t. **Town of Riverdale Park—**At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, the Town of Riverdale Park has not offered comments on the subject application.

13. The subject application does not adequately take into consideration the requirements of the D-D-O Zone and the sector plan. The amendments to development district standards necessary for this development to be approved are the result of a design that is incompatible, in regard to size, height and massing, with buildings on adjacent properties. The amendments to the development district standard that would be required for this development, would not, for these reasons, benefit the development of the development district as required by Section 27-548.25(c) of the Zoning Ordinance, and would in fact substantially impair implementation of the sector plan.

As a result, and as required by Section 27-285(b)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance, 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 without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.

14. Per Section 27-285(b)(4) of the Zoning Ordinance, which became effective on September 1, 2010, a required finding for approval of a detailed site plan is as follows:

(4) The Planning Board may approve a Detailed Site Plan if it finds that the regulated environmental features have been preserved and/or restored in a natural state to the fullest extent possible.

Comment: In a memorandum dated October 13, 2011, the Environmental Planning staff indicated that there are no regulated environmental features found on the subject property; therefore, no preservation or restoration is necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design Section recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and DISAPPROVE Detailed Site Plan, DSP-10028, for the Maryland Book Exchange.