



Note: Staff reports can be accessed at www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm.

Detailed Site Plan

DSP-11008

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Melford Location: Northwest quadrant of John Hanson Highway (US 50/301) and Robert Crain Highway (MD 3) with access to Belair Drive. Applicant/Address: St. John Properties, Inc. 2560 Lord Baltimore Drive Baltimore, MD 21244	Planning Board Hearing Date:	09/15/11
	Staff Report Date:	09/01/11
	Date Accepted:	06/06/11
	Planning Board Action Limit:	09/15/11
	Plan Acreage:	344.0
	Zone:	M-X-T
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
	Gross Floor Area:	N/A
	Planning Area:	71B
	Tier:	Developing
	Council District:	04
	Election District	07
	Municipality:	Bowie
	200-Scale Base Map:	207NE14/15

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
Comprehensive signage plan for all of Melford.	Informational Mailing:	04/19/11
	Acceptance Mailing:	05/27/11
	Sign Posting Deadline:	08/16/11

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Meika Fields Phone Number: 301-780-2458 E-mail: Meika.Fields@ppd.mncppc.org	
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-11008
Melford

Urban Design staff has completed its 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 Mixed-Use Transportation Oriented (M-X-T) Zone;
- b. The requirements of previous approvals;
- c. The requirements of Final Plat 199 @ 42;
- c. The requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*;
- d. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance and the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance; and
- f. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of a comprehensive sign design package for the Melford development (previously known as the Maryland Science and Technology Center).

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	M-X-T	M-X-T
Use(s)	Mixed-use development	Mixed-use development
Acreage	344.0	344.0
Parcels	29	29

3. **Location:** The site consists of approximately 344 acres of land in the M-X-T Zone and is located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Robert Crain Highway (MD 3) and John Hanson Highway (US 50/301). The property is located in Planning Area 71B within the City of Bowie.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The site is bounded to the north by Sherwood Manor, an existing subdivision of single-family detached dwelling units in the Residential-Agricultural (R-A) Zone, and the Patuxent River Park; to the east by the Patuxent River and the US Air Force transmitter station located in Anne Arundel County; to the south primarily by the US 50 right-of-way, saving a long linear piece of vacant O-S-zoned (Open Space) land; and to the west by the MD 3 right-of-way.
5. **Previous Approvals:** On January 25, 1982, the District Council approved Zoning Map Amendment A-9401, with its basic plan, for the subject property (Zoning Ordinance No. 2-1982). This zoning map amendment rezoned the property from the R-A and O-S Zones to the E-I-A (Employment and Institutional Area) Zone. On July 7, 1986, the District Council approved Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-8601, affirming the prior Planning Board decision (PGCPB Resolution No. 86-107), for the Maryland Science and Technology Center. Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-98076 was approved by the Planning Board on September 28, 2000 (PGCPB Resolution No. 99-28(A)). Specific Design Plan SDP-0103 was approved by the Planning Board on April 26, 2001 (PGCPB Resolution No. 01-80). A final plat of subdivision was approved on December 24, 2003 for the Maryland Science and Technology Center.

The property was included in the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A and 74B*. The property was rezoned from the E-I-A Zone to the M-X-T Zone through the approval of County Council Resolution CR-11-2006 on February 6, 2006. On February 15, 2009, the Planning Board approved the Conceptual Site Plan CSP-06002 for Melford (PGCPB Resolution No. 07-09(C,)) which proposed a mixed-use development consisting of a hotel, office, retail, restaurant, research and development, and residential (366 single-family detached and attached units and 500 multifamily units). On September 11, 2007, the District Council approved Conceptual Site Plan CSP-06002 with a condition requiring that a signage package be created, as follows:

23. **Before approval of a detailed site plan for any retail uses, the plans shall demonstrate that retail uses are designed to:**
- i. **Create a signage package for high-quality signs and sign standards, with requirements for all retail and office tenants and owners. The standards shall address size, location, square footage, materials, logos, colors, and lighting. Any revision to existing approved signage plans shall incorporate the previously approved designs.**

The subject detailed site plan is submitted in fulfillment of the above requirement.

6. **Design Features:** The subject comprehensive signage package for Melford is comprised of a hierarchy of the following types of signs: Melford Identification Sign; Entry Signage; Directional Signage (Traffic Circle, Primary Directional and Supplemental Directional); Identification Signage (Property); Independent/Special Use Signage; Tenant Signage (Door Signs, Panel Signs, Building-Mounted Signs, and Monument Signs); Retail Tenant Signs (Channel Letter Signs); and Temporary Signage (Seasonal and Special Event Signage). This signage package is intended to provide a framework for future signage development at Melford. This comprehensive signage plan is designed to be modified as necessary to accommodate future development proposals or building occupants. Further detailed evaluation will be required at the time of the submission of future detailed site plans or specific sign permit applications, as is typically required. A description of the signage proposal is provided below:

- a. **Melford Identification Sign**—The proposed Melford identification sign reaches over 73 feet in height and is comprised of a brick base and steel tower. The sign is proposed along the southern property boundary of the site and is designed to be visible from John Hanson Highway (US 50/301). The proposed tower is supported by a brick and pre-cast masonry base measuring 18 feet in width on all four sides and 16 feet in height. The vertical tower structure is proposed to be constructed of steel supports and steel tubes that create a cross pattern. Approximately three-quarters up the structure, at a height of 57 feet, steel plates that measure approximately 5 feet by 18 feet are proposed on each side of the structure. The “Melford” name in channel letters is proposed upon the plates along with the yellow and white St. John Properties logo.

The Melford identification sign is the signature sign of the development. It is the largest sign in the signage proposal.

- b. **Entry Signage**—Three entry signs are proposed along Melford Boulevard between Robert Crain Highway (MD 3) and the Melford Boulevard/Science Drive traffic circle. One entry sign is proposed in the median of Melford Boulevard located parallel to the street. It is comprised of a brick and pre-cast masonry base, and has a height of approximately 5 feet and a length of 30 feet. A metal signage panel with the “Melford” name is centered on top of the base and is flanked on one side by a tower element, which resembles the design of the Melford identification sign. The median sign is in an area of the median under the jurisdiction of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and will require SHA approval. The median sign appears to be approximately 10–12 feet in height.

Approximately 250 feet southeast of the proposed median sign on Melford Boulevard are two gateway entrance feature signs termed “Left Gate” (inbound) and “Right Gate” (outbound). The base of each of these “gate” signs is 20 feet in length and approximately 7 feet in height at the curb elevation. The base of the signs will be constructed of brick and pre-cast masonry. A metal signage panel, with dimensions of 3 feet by 12 feet and the “Melford” name, is centered on top of the base and is flanked on each side by a metal tower design element. “Melford” will be visible on each side of the proposed signs. The combined height of these structures, including the base, is 10.5 feet and 17 feet. The inbound (Left Gate) entry sign is proposed to be 20 feet behind the curb, while a 15-foot setback from the curb is proposed for the outbound (Right Gate) entry sign.

According to the applicant, the “Melford” lettering in these signs will be illuminated by reverse channel light-emitting diode (LED) lighting. The vertical elements will be lit from within the base, with lighting reflected off the back cap into the structure without escaping upwards into the night sky.

- c. **Directional and Identification Signage**—Four types of directional signage are proposed within the development, including traffic circle signage, primary directional signage, individual property identification signage, and supplemental directional signage. Directional and identification signs are to be fabricated of steel or aluminum. The base, or background, is proposed to be finished as brushed anodized aluminum, or have a silver metallic automotive grade painted finish. The corporate logo will be included in the design of each of the directional signs in a gold and black theme. No illumination is planned for these signs.
- (1) **Traffic Circle Signage**—The detailed site plan indicates that four traffic circle signs are proposed in three locations throughout the development. Each sign is proposed with a maximum dimension of 7 feet 1-inch in height by 4 feet 6 inches in width, for an area of 31.9 square feet.
 - (2) **Primary Directional Signage**—Each of these three signs is proposed with maximum dimensions of 5 feet high by 2.67 feet (32 inches) wide, for an area of 13.35 square feet. The applicant proposed text on the signs to include street names, building names or numbers, specific tenants, points of interest or neighborhoods within the development, or other directional information.
 - (3) **Individual Property Identification Signage**—Sixteen property identification signs are proposed within the project. Each sign is proposed to have an area of 13.35 square feet, and is 5 feet in height by 2.67 feet (32 inches) in width. The property identification signs are intended to indicate company names in a specific building and addresses with directional arrows, as needed.
 - (4) **Supplemental Directional Signage**—Supplemental directional signage is proposed where additional directional information is required within a specific destination. Text on supplemental directional signage may include, but is not limited to, delivery and visitor entrances, specific tenants, suites or buildings, or other directional information. Twenty-two signs are proposed within this category; all appear to be located on private property. The proposed dimensions of the supplemental directional signs are a maximum of 3.5 feet (42 inches) in height by a maximum of 2 feet (24 inches) in width, resulting in a maximum sign area of 7 square feet per sign.
- d. **Independent/Special Use Signage**—Independent/special use signs identify independent single-use properties within the park as well as cultural and community points of interest. Eight of these signs are proposed throughout the project. Examples of special use signs include the Melford historic property, Sherwood Manor, and the Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation public recreation area. Other uses that fall under this type of signage include the site of the three approved Marriott hotels, the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) facility, the U.S. Census facility, and the Prince George’s County Telecommunications Center. Many of these facilities have either approved or existing signage identifying these properties.

- e. **Tenant Signage**—Tenant signage identifies individual businesses and/or the location of the business. Types of tenant signs include door signs, panel signs, monument signs, and building-mounted signs. Signage locations, specifications, and details will vary with each building’s unique architectural design.
- (1) **Door Signs**—Door signs are permitted in an area of 20 inches by 20 inches on the door, with white vinyl lettering only, and are not permitted on non-operable doors or emergency-exit-only doors. The suite number may be permitted outside of the 20 inch by 20-inch text box. All information is shown to be limited to the upper half of the door.
 - (2) **Panel Signs**—Panel signs identify the location of ground-floor, or equivalent, tenant entrances. The locations of these signs will be incorporated into the architecture of all buildings with ground-floor, or equivalent, tenant entrances. Panel sign content on front or side building elevations is limited to the name of the tenant (which may include trade names) and the tenant’s logo, at a tenant’s main entrance only. Panel locations and dimensions will vary depending on each building’s architecture. Panel finishes may be brushed metal or automotive grade to match or coordinate with the architectural finishes on the building where they are used. Sign panel content on rear building elevations may include operational information, such as, but not limited to, “Deliveries” or “Employees Only.”
 - (3) **Building-Mounted Signs**—For signs on the multi-story office and research and development buildings, the applicant is proposing building-mounted signs to provide location information and tenant identification. The applicant proposes a maximum of four signs per elevation for the multi-story office buildings with each sign having a maximum signage envelope area of 600 square feet. Painted or brushed (aluminum or stainless) non-illuminated or reverse halo channel letters with LED illumination are proposed. Internally-illuminated channel letters may also be used for tenants/owners occupying the multi-story buildings.
 - (4) **Monument Signs**—Free-standing monument signs are proposed as an option for tenants who occupy at least 5,000 square feet. The applicant proposes no more than five monument signs per building. The materials for the sign base are proposed to be compatible with the architectural materials of the building. The maximum dimension of a free-standing monument sign is indicated to be 48 inches in height and 72 inches in length.
- f. **Retail Tenant Signs**—For retail tenants, the applicant proposes a standard of individual, face-illuminated channel letters mounted to a raceway. Sign panel locations and dimensions are proposed to vary depending on each building’s architecture. The detailed site plan proposes a minimum letter height of 16 inches and a maximum letter height of 24 inches. The length of a retail tenant sign may not exceed 80 percent of the width of the store front.
- g. **Temporary Signage**—The applicant proposes two types of temporary signage, including temporary leasing signs or banners, not to exceed 600 square feet, and seasonal or special event signage for sporting competitions, seasonal festivals, community events, grand openings, and similar occasions.

- h. **Public Interest Information Signs**—The application also includes a category for historic plaques, interpretive signage, and building plaques. Section 27-602 of the Zoning Ordinance states that public interest signs of a noncommercial nature may be exempt from a sign permit, such as: safety signs; traffic control signs; and signs of historical interest. A note on the site plan states that these signs may be erected without further permitting required.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 7. **The Requirements of the Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in the M-X-T Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.
 - a. The subject application proposes a comprehensive signage package inclusive of freestanding and building-mounted signs. Signs in the M-X-T Zone are regulated by Part 12 of the Zoning Ordinance. As discussed in Sections 27-613(f)(1) and 27-614(e)(1), in mixed-use zones, the design standards for freestanding and building-mounted, on-site signs shall be determined by the Planning Board for each development at the time of detailed site plan (DSP) review. Each detailed site plan shall be accompanied by plans, sketches, or photographs indicating the design, size, methods of sign support, and other information the Planning Board requires. In approving these signs, the Planning Board shall find that the proposed signs are appropriate in size, type, and design, given the proposed location and the use to be served, and are in keeping with the remainder of the mixed-use zone development. The subject detailed site plan has been submitted for Planning Board approval of comprehensive signs in Melford, in accordance with the above requirement.
 - b. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-546(d), which sets forth additional findings required for the Planning Board to approve conceptual site plans and detailed site plans in the M-X-T Zone. The required findings were met at the time of conceptual site plan (CSP) approval and are further met during the review of the subject DSP.

Section 27-546(d) for development in the M-X-T Zone is as follows:

- 1. **The proposed development is in conformance with the purposes and other provisions of this division;**

Comment: This DSP for Melford is in conformance with the requirements of Part 10, Division 2, of the Zoning Ordinance.

- 2. **The proposed development has an outward orientation which is either physically and visually integrated with existing adjacent development or catalyzes adjacent community improvement and rejuvenation;**

Comment: Melford is designed with an outward orientation toward the Robert Crain Highway (MD 3) corridor to the west. The conceptual signage proposal will encourage more visual integration within Melford and enhance its internal and external visibility.

3. The proposed development is compatible with existing and proposed development in the vicinity;

Comment: The proposal is in conformance with the above requirement. The proposed signage will be compatible with the existing and proposed uses. It is also designed for physical compatibility with the existing and proposed structures within the 344-acre site.

4. The mix of uses, and the arrangement and design of buildings and other improvements, reflect a cohesive development capable of sustaining an independent environment of continuing quality and stability;

Comment: The subject application for signage reflects and will enhance a cohesive development capable of sustaining an independent environment of continuing quality and stability.

5. If the development is staged, each building phase is designed as a self-sufficient entity, while allowing for effective integration of subsequent phases;

Comment: The above finding is not applicable to the subject comprehensive signage package.

6. The pedestrian system is convenient and comprehensively designed to encourage pedestrian activity within the development;

Comment: The above finding is not applicable to the subject comprehensive signage package.

7. On the Detailed Site Plan, in areas of the development which are to be used for pedestrian activities or as gathering places for people, adequate attention has been paid to human scale, high quality urban design, and other amenities, such as types and textures of materials, landscaping and screening, street furniture, and lighting;

Comment: The above finding is not applicable to the subject comprehensive signage package.

8. The Requirements of Previous Approvals: The Melford development has a number of previous approvals that address some standards related to signage. The subject detailed site plan was submitted as an umbrella detailed site plan for signage, to comprehensively establish design guidelines for signage within the Melford development. The following discussion is offered regarding previous approvals as they relate to signage:

a. Conceptual Site Plan CSP-06002—Conceptual Site Plan CSP-06002 was approved by the District Council on September 11, 2007, with the following conditions applicable to the review of the proposed detailed site plan:

4. Applicable detailed site plans that may affect the historic vista of the Melford House shall demonstrate that proposed buildings do not obstruct the vista.

Comment: The proposed signage will not be within the environmental setting or the viewshed of the Melford and Cemetery historic site.

23. Before approval of a detailed site plan for any retail uses, the plans shall demonstrate that retail uses are designed to:

- i. Create a signage package for high-quality signs and sign standards, with requirements for all retail and office tenants and owners. The standards shall address size, location, square footage, materials, logos, colors, and lighting. Any revision to existing approved signage plans shall incorporate the previously approved designs.**

Comment: The subject detailed site plan is submitted in fulfillment of the above requirement.

- j. Eliminate all temporary signage on the site or attached to the exterior facades of a building.**

Comment: The above condition specifically speaks to the elimination of temporary signage for retail uses. Staff recommends that the subject comprehensive signage detailed site plan be revised to state that temporary signage for the retail buildings shall be prohibited.

26. Prior to the approval of a detailed site plan, the following issues shall be addressed:

- b. Appropriate signage should be placed near the historic site, to call attention to the history of the area.**

Comment: The above condition has not been addressed prior to the submission of the subject detailed site plan. No signage currently exists near the historic site to call attention to the history of the area. Under the category of Independent/Special Use Signs, the detailed site plan proposes a historic marker, which is to be placed near the entry driveway of the Melford House where it intersects with Melford Boulevard. The style of the marker is similar to state historical markers, which typically include the name of the historic site and a short statement about the site's significance. These signs are typically cast iron or aluminum signs that are post or pole-mounted. Urban Design staff recommends that, prior to certificate approval of the subject detailed site plan, the applicant submit a proposal for the graphics and text for the proposed historic marker for review and approval by the Historic Preservation Section. The Urban Design staff also recommends that the sign for the historic site be installed prior to acceptance of any future detailed site plan application within Melford.

- c. The proposed lighting system shall use full cut-off lighting systems, with limited light spill-over.**

Comment: Light spill-over has been a consideration in the review of the sign package. Internally-lit signs are encouraged over externally-lit signs with up-lighting. Staff recommends that lighting for the large Melford identification sign primarily utilize internally-illuminated channel letters, and down-lighting of

the face of the base (landmark). Any internal up-lighting should be reflected against the horizontal surfaces to ensure that light does not escape into the night sky.

Staff also recommends that all monument signs be internally lit, down-lit, or utilize back-lit reverse channel letters.

- b. **Detailed Site Plan DSP-07031, Melford (Pod 6)**—In a detailed site plan approved by the Planning Board on July 24, 2008 for Melford, Pod 6, Lots 1–6, the Planning Board approved the following condition regarding signage:

13. Prior to issuance of any new sign permits for the Melford development, the applicant shall:

- b. **Submit a unified CSP for signage for the entire Melford development that complies with the approved CDP and the recently approved CSP. The signage program should show consistency between previously approved signage and proposed signage in terms of size (height), location (setback), square footage, materials, logos, colors and lighting.**

Comment: The subject detailed site plan is submitted in satisfaction of the above requirement for a conceptual site plan. The applicant provided the following statement in regard to the signage history of the Melford development, formerly known as the Maryland Science and Technology Center:

“The previous signage plan approved for the Maryland Science and Technology Center in SDP-0204 was found to be consistent with the original CDP-8601 and reflects the current sign program found in Melford. The proposed signage program in the instant DSP carries forth much of the style and appearance of the signage approved under SDP-0204, although it provides more variety in the type of freestanding and directional signs used based on the evolving development pattern at Melford. While the proposed signs are consistent with the concept and intent of the previously approved and existing signage, it should be noted that CDP-8601 is no longer in force and effect on the property by virtue of the project’s rezoning from the E-I-A Zone to the M-X-T Zone pursuant to the 2006 Bowie Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment.”

Staff concurs with the applicant and believes that the proposed signage program is consistent with the previously approved signage and existing signage in terms of size (height), location (setback), square footage, materials, logos, colors, and lighting.

9. **Final Plat of Subdivision:** This is a limited detailed site plan for signage. There is no effect on any final plat of subdivision.
10. **Prince George’s County Landscape Manual:** The limited detailed site plan for signage is exempt from the requirements of the 2010 *Prince George’s County Landscape Manual*.
11. **Prince George’s County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance and the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The site is exempt from the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance. The site is not required to submit a natural resources inventory (NRI)

plan, a Type 2 tree conservation plan, a letter of exemption, or to demonstrate compliance with the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance because the request does not involve any land disturbance. If a grading permit resulting in over 5,000 square feet of disturbance is required to implement any proposed sign, conformance with the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance will be required at the time of permit approval.

12. **Urban Design Review:** During the review of the detailed site plan for signage, Urban Design staff noted that a large portion of the project area is designated “Future Development,” with no development plan or signage proposed. Future development areas are largely north of Melford Boulevard and around the historic Melford house. Staff recommends that all development within Melford conform to the sign styles and dimensions set forth in the subject detailed site plan. All future development areas within Melford are required, under M-X-T zoning regulations, to receive approval of a detailed site plan prior to development. Future detailed site plans should include a sign detail sheet proposing the exact location and amount of signs proposed. The proposed signs should be in full conformance with the requirements established through the approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-11008 and any future revisions.
 13. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:
 - a. **Community Planning South Division**—In a memorandum dated May 26, 2011, Community Planning South staff concluded that the subject application is consistent with the 2002 *Prince George’s County General Plan* Development Pattern policies for the Developing Tier, and the application conforms with the land use recommendations of the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A and 74B* for moderate- to high-density mixed-use developments of office, employment, retail, hotel, residential, parkland, and open-space uses. The following discussion was provided:
 - (1) The following guidelines excerpted from pages 13 to 15 of the Master Plan for Bowie and vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment are applicable to this application:
 - **Create a signage package for high-quality signs and sign standards and requirements for all retail and office tenants and owners, which should address size, location, square footage, materials, logos, colors, and lighting. Any revisions to the existing approved signage plans shall incorporate the previously approved designs.**
 - **Temporary signage on the site or attached to the exterior facades of a building shall not be permitted.**
 - **Appropriate signage should be placed near the historic site illustrating the history of the area.**
- Comment:** The signage proposal is consistent with the guidelines in the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A and 74B*.

- b. **Historic Preservation Section**—In a memorandum dated July 6, 2011, Historic Preservation staff provided comment on the subject proposal, as follows:
- (1) The subject property includes the Melford and Cemetery Historic Site (#71B-016). Built in the 1840s, Melford is a 2½-story brick plantation house of side-hall-and-double-parlor plan. The house is distinguished by a two-story, semicircular bay and a parapetted, double chimney at the south gable end. Attached to the north gable end is a lower kitchen wing built of brick and stone. The interior exhibits fine Greek Revival-style trim. The house was built by Richard Duckett and later was home to three generations of the Hardisty family. The grounds include several early outbuildings and terraced gardens, and there is a Duckett family burial ground on a separate parcel located on a knoll to the northwest. The bay and chimney configuration makes Melford unique in Prince George’s County. The property is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
 - (2) The plans do not identify Melford and the Duckett Family Cemetery as a Prince George’s County Historic Site (#71B-016), therefore the applicant should revise the subject detailed site plan to identify both the Melford historic site environmental setting that includes the house site, adjacent outbuildings and gardens, and the cemetery, and label the two parcels as Melford and Cemetery Historic Site #71B-016.
 - (3) The proposed signage will be compatible with the Melford and Cemetery Historic Site (#71B-016) and will have minimal impact on its viewshed.
- c. **Permit Review Section**—In a memorandum dated July 20, 2011, Permit Review staff provided the following comment on the subject application. Section 27-618(d) of the Zoning Ordinance states “The Planning Board shall find that the proposed signs are appropriate in size, type, and design given the location and the Uses to be served.” The sign detail sheets appear to include all necessary criteria for the proposed signs.
- d. **Transportation Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated August 22, 2011, the Transportation Planning Section reviewed the submitted detailed site plan application for conformance with the 2009 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* (MPOT) and the 2006 *Approved Master Plan for Bowie and Vicinity and Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 71A, 71B, 74A and 74B*. The signage plan covers directional signage at intersections and at traffic circles, property identification signs, and various special use or supplemental signs. Signage related to bicycle and pedestrian facilities are not covered under this plan, nor are they required by the conceptual site plan (CSP). Any signage that is provided in the future related to trails, bike routes, or pedestrian facilities (such as trailhead signage, bike route or bike lane signs, and pedestrian warning signs) should be consistent with the latest guidance from the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*. No additional recommendations are made at this time with regard to bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
- e. **The City of Bowie**—On August 1, 2011, the Bowie City Council conducted a public hearing on the above referenced detailed site plan, and at the conclusion of its hearing the Bowie City Council recommended approval of the DSP with modifications. Of particular

concern to the City of Bowie are sign lighting, quantity, and size. The City recommends that ground-mounted up-lighting be avoided in the proposed signs to reduce light spill-over. The City also recommends reductions in the quantity of some of the proposed signs, in particular, the monument signs. All of the City of Bowie's recommendations have been reviewed and incorporated into staff's final recommendation to the Planning Board, as appropriate.

14. As required by Section 27-285(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, the detailed site plan represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9 of the Prince George's County Code without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.
15. As required by 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:

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.

It is not necessary to make this finding in this case as the signage proposal will have no effect on regulated environmental features.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Detailed Site Plan DSP-11008, Melford, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to signature approval of the detailed site plan, the following revisions shall be made or information shall be provided:
 - a. The plans shall be revised to correctly identify the Melford and Cemetery Historic Site #71B-016.
 - b. The applicant shall provide the following notes on the detailed site plan:
 - (1) Lighting for the Melford identification sign shall utilize light-emitting diode (LED) internally-illuminated channel letters. Lighting shall primarily consist of down-lighting of the face of the base (landmark), and internal up-lighting shall be reflected against the horizontal surfaces to ensure that light does not escape into the night sky.
 - (2) All traffic circle signs and primary directional signs shall be field located so as to not obstruct a driver's line-of-sight.
 - (3) Temporary signage for the retail buildings shall be prohibited.

- c. The directional and/or identification signage proposal shall be revised as follows:
 - (1) All traffic circle signs, with the exception of the sign proposed in the Melford Boulevard median located northwest of the first circle as one enters the development, shall be reduced to the dimensions of primary directional signs.
 - (2) The primary directional signs shall contain only the street name and commercial vehicle direction with a directional arrow, to provide wayfinding/directions to motorists.
- d. The independent/special use signage proposal shall be revised as follows:
 - (1) With the exception of signs for the Melford historic property, the Sherwood Manor neighborhood, or land owned by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), the design, area/size, and dimensions of the independent/special use signs shall be identical to those of the property identification signs proposed by this detailed site plan.
- e. The tenant signage proposal shall be revised as follows:
 - (1) The number of signs per elevation shall be limited for the multi-story office buildings to a maximum of four building-mounted signs per elevation of each multi-story office building, with a maximum sign envelope area of 600 square feet for each sign. Notwithstanding the above, ground floor tenants/owners in a multi-story office building shall be allowed a panel sign above their door if they have independent external access. Each building-mounted sign shall be in scale with other such signs on the same elevation.
 - (2) The maximum sign area for building-mounted tenant signs on a given building façade shall not exceed 15 percent of the area of that façade. Where more stringent provisions exist in these sign design standards, those standards shall prevail. (For the purposes of this condition, panel signs and door signs shall not be considered building-mounted signs.) A note to that effect shall be placed on the site plan.
 - (3) The typical detail of a monument sign, shown in the detailed site plan, shall be amended to accurately reflect the dimensions of the “Power” sign provided on Sheet 10, thereby establishing a consistent theme for monument signs throughout the development.
 - (4) The number of monument signs per building shall be reduced to a maximum of three.
 - (5) The base and sign box for each monument sign serving a specific building shall be the same for each sign. The base supporting all monument signs shall be a hard surface material (brick, stone, or masonry) that is the predominant hard surface material used on the building where the tenants of the monument signs are located.
 - (6) All monument signs that are to be lit shall be internally lit, or shall utilize back-lit reverse channel letters, or be down-lit to reduce light spill-over.

- (7) No signage of any type shall be placed in any window (except the permitted door signs) in any building within the Melford development.
 - f. The maximum length of an individual sign for retail tenants shall be 80 percent of the width of the store front of the respective tenant or a maximum of 16 feet, whichever is less.
 - g. Seasonal and special events signs shall be located at least ten feet behind the street right-of-way and at least 50 feet from the nearest corner of any street intersection. These signs shall not be displayed for more than 30 consecutive days.
 - h. The applicant shall work with the Countywide Planning Division, Historic Preservation Section, to refine the text and character of the independent/special use sign for the Melford house.
- 2. The one entry sign proposed in the median of Melford Boulevard shall be reviewed and approved by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), if located within the median under that agency's jurisdiction.
 - 3. Independent/special use signs that are yet to be installed shall be located outside of the public right-of-way.
 - 4. In instances where signs will be within a public right-of-way, a maintenance agreement shall be established between the developer and the appropriate public agency.
 - 5. All signs shall be located so as to not interfere with a driver's line-of-sight.
 - 6. All development within Melford shall conform to the sign styles and dimensions set forth in the subject Detailed Site Plan, DSP-11008, and any future revisions.
 - 7. Future approvals for specific signs shall include a sign detail sheet proposing the exact location and amount of signs proposed. Sign proposals shall indicate full conformance with the requirements established through the approval of Detailed Site Plan DSP-11008 and any future revisions.
 - 8. Prior to acceptance of any future detailed site plan within the boundaries of the Melford Conceptual Site Plan (CSP-06002), the applicant shall install the approved independent/special use sign near the historic site to call attention to the history of the area.