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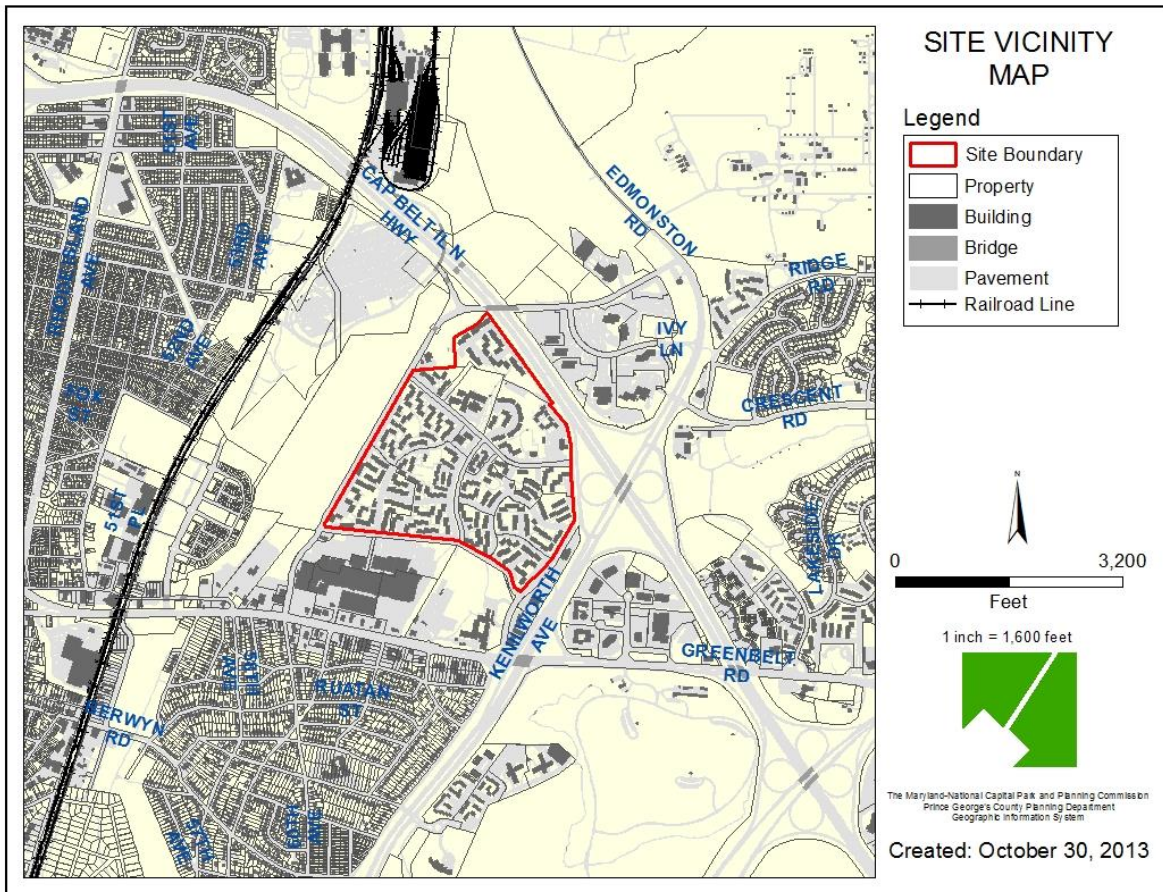
Detailed Site Plan

DSP-12061

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station Location: Northeast quadrant of the intersection of Breezewood Drive and Cherrywood Lane. Applicant/Address: Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station 9230 Springhill Lane Greenbelt, MD 20770	Planning Board Hearing Date:	11/14/13
	Staff Report Date:	11/01/13
	Date Accepted:	06/25/13
	Planning Board Action Limit:	Waived
	Plan Acreage:	151.79
	Zone:	M-U-I/D-D-O
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
	Gross Floor Area:	N/A
	Planning Area:	67
	Tier:	Developed
	Council District:	04
	Election District	21
	Municipality:	Greenbelt
	200-Scale Base Map:	211NE05

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
Proposed monument and banner signs.	Informational Mailing:	04/15/13
	Acceptance Mailing:	06/21/13
	Sign Posting Deadline:	10/15/13

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		



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan DSP-12061
Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station

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 APPROVAL with conditions as described in the Recommendation section of this report.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

- a. Compliance with the requirements of the Development District Overlay (D-D-O) Zone.
- b. Compliance with the requirements of the 2013 *Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*.
- c. Compliance with the requirements of the Mixed Use–Infill (M-U-I) Zone.
- d. The requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.
- e. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance.
- f. The requirements of the Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance.
- g. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

- 1. **Request:** The detailed site plan (DSP) is for the addition of two new freestanding monument signs, two new building-mounted banner signs, and 27 freestanding pole banner signs within an existing multifamily residential development in the Mixed Use–Infill (M-U-I) and Development District Overlay (D-D-O) Zones.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zones	M-U-I/D-D-O	M-U-I/D-D-O
Use	Multifamily Residential	Multifamily Residential
Acreage	151.79	151.79
Monument Signs	9	9 (2 replaced)
Building-Mounted Banner Signs	2	4
Pole Banners	0	27

3. **Location:** The subject site is located in Planning Area 67, Council District 4, and the Developed Tier. More specifically, the site is located in the northeastern quadrant of the intersection of Breezewood Drive and Cherrywood Lane, within the City of Greenbelt. The site is zoned Mixed Use–Infill (M-U-I) and is subject to the Development District Overlay (D-D-O) Zone standards found in the 2013 *Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA).
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The subject property is generally bounded to the north by the right-of-way of Edmonston Road with the Capital Beltway (I-95/495) beyond; to the east by the right-of-way of Edmonston Road with Kenilworth Avenue (MD 201) beyond; to the south by the right-of-way of Breezewood Drive with commercially developed Beltway Plaza in the M-U-I Zone and Greenbelt Middle School in the Open Space (O-S) Zone beyond; and to the west by the right-of-way of Cherrywood Lane, with the Indian Creak Stream Valley open space in the Reserved Open Space (R-O-S) Zone beyond. The existing Greenbelt Metro Station lies further to the west, beyond this open space property.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The subject property was originally developed as the Springhill Lake multifamily rental residential development in the 1960s with a total of 2,877 dwelling units. The site remained largely the same until Conceptual Site Plan CSP-05001 was approved by the Prince George’s County Planning Board on July 28, 2005 (PGCPB Resolution No. 05-180) to redevelop the entire property with a mix of uses, including multifamily residential, retail, a community building, and recreational facilities. Subsequently, Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-05082 for the proposed redevelopment was disapproved by the Planning Board on May 25, 2006 due to inadequate fire and rescue services. A Detailed Site Plan (DSP-05089), which had already been filed for the redevelopment proposal, was later withdrawn. The CSP, while still valid, does not have any bearing on the subject application which is only for new signage. Also, because of the limited scope of the proposal, no stormwater management concept approval is necessary.
6. **Design Features:** The subject property is a large conglomeration of existing parcels that form a roughly triangular shape. Public rights-of-way border all three edges and two more, Springhill Lane and Springhill Drive, bisect the existing multifamily residential development. The only improvements proposed with the subject DSP are new freestanding and building-mounted signage scattered throughout the property. No changes are proposed to uses, buildings, parking, landscaping, or any other type of site feature.

The first sign type proposed is a freestanding monument sign, of which there are nine existing on-site. Two of these, at the two aquatic centers, are to be replaced with this application. The other seven were previously replaced, in a similar style, under permits issued in 2011 prior to the approval of the 2013 Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA. The new signs are approximately five feet, eight inches high and six feet wide and will be externally lit. They feature a gray, blue, and olive

color scheme, with white lettering, and are generally rectangular in shape with an open triangle on top. They each read “Aquatic Center Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station.” Both of these signs will be located internal to the property, in front of the existing aquatic centers, adjacent to parking areas and away from the public rights-of-way.

The second sign type proposed is building-mounted banners, with two existing on-site and two more proposed, each attached to a separate building. Each is generally triangular in shape and is mounted flush to each building between the upper level apartment windows and the eaves of the gable roof with no lighting. The banner is light blue in color with white lettering that reads approximately “Next right: home. RENT 866-653-9649 Franklin Park Apartments.” All four of these face east and are proposed within an approximately 900-foot length of the property frontage along Edmonston Road, with the Capital Beltway (I-495/95) and Kenilworth Avenue (MD 201) beyond. No area or size was given for this sign type.

The third type of proposed sign is a freestanding pole banner, which is a colored vinyl banner mounted to an approximately 14-foot-high black, metal, decorative pole. The pole is capped with a diamond-shaped symbol, similar to the existing monument signs on-site. The colored banner, which is two feet wide by four feet high and hangs more than seven feet off the ground, continues the blue, white, and olive color scheme and reads “It’s a New Day FranklinParkLiving.com.” There are 27 pole banners proposed with this DSP that are distributed adjacent to all public rights-of-way throughout the site, with five along Cherrywood Lane, five along Breezewood Drive, six along Edmonston Road extended, six along Springhill Drive, and five along Springhill Lane. No separate lighting is proposed for these signs.

The submitted DSP package also includes a detail for, and some specified locations for, a decorative street sign within the development. This type of sign, being a public noncommercial sign, is not subject to the D-D-O requirements or a DSP review. These should be removed from the plan and further coordination regarding their installation should be done with the City of Greenbelt, which has jurisdiction over the adjacent public rights-of-way.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **The 2013 Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment and the standards of the Development District Overlay (D-D-O) Zone:** Until the final plan document is published, the 2013 *Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA) consists of the 2012 preliminary plan document, Prince George’s County Planning Board Resolution No. 12-109, and County Council Resolutions CR-14-2013 and CR-15-2013. These documents must be read concurrently to determine the approved plan and sectional map amendment recommendations.

The approved sector plan recommends an integrated mix of uses at Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station to include residential, park and open space, and neighborhood-scale retail and office uses. Since this DSP is limited to signage only and retains the existing mix of uses on the subject property, this application conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2013 Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA.

The approved sector plan envisions gateways into the redeveloped Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station property at key points along Cherrywood Lane at Breezewood Drive and Springhill Drive to define key entry points and foster a sense of arrival (Strategy 2.1 on page 98).

Requests to Amend Development District Standards

The submitted application and justification materials indicate the desire to deviate from a number of development district standards to accommodate the proposed signs on the subject property. These standards are discussed below (all page numbers reference the sector plan):

Architectural Elements: Signage (page 229)—The applicant requests amendments to the signage standards of the D-D-O Zone to provide more than one freestanding or monument sign for a residential development exceeding 200 dwelling units and to allow for building-mounted signage that exceeds ten percent of the façade area of the commercial portion of the building. The applicant contends that the proposed signage meets the rest of the standards; however, some information regarding the areas and materials of the signs, and their setback from the nearest curb lines, is not provided on the plan to ensure their conformance to the standards. Therefore, conditions of approval have been included in the Recommendation Section of this report requiring this information be added in order to demonstrate conformance.

With regard to the requested amendment for the number of freestanding or monument signs, the DSP application requests the replacement of two existing monument signs at the two aquatic centers on-site, in addition to the seven existing monument signs on the property that were previously permitted for replacement in 2011. Staff does not object to these two new signs as they will not be visible from any public rights-of-way and are mainly for residents and visitor way-finding purposes.

In regard to the 27 new freestanding pole banner signs, these are largely decorative in purpose and, the applicant contends, will help create a sense of community. However, the proposed number of these signs greatly exceeds the sector plan's recommendation and may actually serve to clutter the public rights-of-way and detract from the existing monument signs on-site. This is not so much of a concern along Springhill Lane and Springhill Drive, as these streets are both completely internal to the multifamily residential development and are mainly used by property residents and visitors. Of course, all of this signage could possibly be removed one day if the approved CSP for the property is pursued for development. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Board approve this amendment request for two new aquatic center monument signs and 21 freestanding pole banner signs. The quantity of 21 pole banner signs is based on inclusion of all of the ones proposed along Springhill Lane and Springhill Drive as shown on the DSP, but would be limited as follows along the outer public rights-of-way: a maximum of three along Cherrywood Lane, a maximum of three along Breezewood Drive, and a maximum of four along Edmonston Road. Additionally, pole banner signs along these frontages should be located a minimum of 500 feet from any monument sign or other pole banner sign. The 500 foot distance is based on existing block lengths along the areas where the applicant requested to place signs. Staff finds that this spacing between signs, and from monument signs, will help to minimize signage clutter along the outer edges of the residential development, while still contributing to a sense of place.

With regard to the request for building-mounted signage in excess of ten percent of the façade area of the commercial portion of the building, both proposed building-mounted banners exceed the ten percent limit. One is the size of approximately 23 percent of the façade area, and the other is the size of approximately 17 percent of the façade area. These two proposed signs are in addition to two existing building-mounted banner signs, all within an approximately 900 foot stretch of road frontage. This amount of signage, oriented toward fast-moving traffic on the Capital Beltway (I-495/95), is excessive, would not benefit the development, and is contrary to the goals and strategies of the sector plan. While staff does not believe such signs should be

approved as permanent, depending on the size and display period this type of sign could possibly qualify as a temporary real estate advertising sign, which is exempt from sign permit, as allowed per Section 27-602 of the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, staff recommends that the Planning Board disapprove this amendment request. A condition has been included in the Recommendation Section of this report requiring the proposed building-mounted banner signs be removed from the DSP.

8. **Zoning Ordinance:** The DSP application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the M-U-I Zone and the requirements of the D-D-O Zone of the Zoning Ordinance:

a. 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 of the site design guidelines and development district standards of the Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA as discussed in Finding 7 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 subject DSP does not propose a change of uses. The existing multifamily residential development was originally constructed in the 1960s.

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 subject DSP does not propose any new buildings.

(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 subject DSP does not propose any changes to building façades or entries.

- (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 subject DSP does not propose any change to the overall site design.

- (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 subject DSP does not propose any new buildings, or changes to building materials or colors.

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

Comment: The subject DSP does not propose any outdoor storage areas or mechanical equipment.

- (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 subject DSP does request some amendments to the applicable development district standards for the signs as discussed in Finding 7 above.

- (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 subject DSP does not propose any changes to the existing operations of the site.

- (ii) **Location of activities with potential adverse impacts;**

Comment: The subject DSP does not propose any activities with potential adverse impacts.

- (iii) **Location and use of trash receptacles;**

Comment: The subject DSP does not propose any changes to existing trash receptacles.

(iv) **Location of loading and delivery spaces;**

Comment: The subject DSP does not propose any changes to existing loading or delivery spaces.

(v) **Light intensity and hours of illumination; and**

Comment: The subject DSP does not propose any new lighting.

(vi) **Location and use of outdoor vending machines.**

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

- b. Section 27-548.25(b) requires that the Planning Board find that the site plan meets the applicable development district standards in order to approve a DSP. As discussed in Finding 7 above, this DSP requests multiple amendments to applicable D-D-O Zone standards. Staff believes that some of the requested amendments to the development standards would benefit the development district and would not substantially impair implementation of the Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA.
9. **The Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** The subject DSP is not subject to the requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual) because it does not propose any new gross square footage or any improvements that require landscaping, and it will not require a building or grading permit.
10. **The Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance:** The subject DSP includes only signage improvements, with no grading or clearing of trees; therefore, it is not subject to the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance at this time.
11. **The Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The subject application proposes less than 5,000 square feet of disturbance and is, therefore, exempt from the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance per Section 25-127(a)(1) of the Prince George's County Code.
12. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:
- a. **Community Planning Division**—In a memorandum dated October 24, 2013, the Community Planning Division provided an analysis of the subject DSP's conformance with the D-D-O Zone as discussed in Finding 7 above. They also provided the following additional information:
- This application is consistent with the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* Development Pattern policies for centers in the Developed Tier. This application conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2013 *Approved Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA) for a mix of residential, park and open space, and neighborhood-scale retail and office uses. The Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA retained the subject property in the M-U-I Zone and retained the D-D-O Zone, which requires site plan review for new development.

The subject site is not located within the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) Interim Land Use Control (ILUC) area or the county's aviation policy areas. The vision of the General Plan is met by this application. The large existing multifamily apartment complex includes retail uses and helps fulfill General Plan policies to encourage medium- to high-density, mixed-use, transit-, and pedestrian-oriented development in the Developed Tier, to promote development of mixed residential and nonresidential uses at moderate to high densities and intensities in context with surrounding neighborhoods, with a strong emphasis on transit-oriented design as recommended for designated centers and corridors.

The applicant's statement of justification incorrectly cites the date of the current sector plan as July 2012. The Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA was approved in March 2013. Furthermore, page two of the statement of justification inadvertently refers to the 2001 development district standards for the Springhill Lake subarea, all of which were superseded by the 2013 development district.

The applicant's coversheet contains an inconsistency between the table for "Signs Proposed Per Sheet" and General Note 7 with regard to the number of signs that are being proposed. The applicant needs to clarify how many signs are proposed with this DSP.

The proposed signage package as a whole greatly exceeds the plan's recommendation and will detract from the sense of gateways and arrivals to the larger development.

Community Planning staff is concerned with the significant number of freestanding signs proposed by this application. The approved development district standards allow for a maximum of one freestanding or monument sign for each residential development exceeding 200 dwelling units. In addition to the freestanding signs that currently exist on the subject property, the applicant is proposing more than 30 additional freestanding signs. This number greatly exceeds the signage permitted by right within the Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Development District.

Additionally, staff questions the need for four building-mounted banner signs. Two such signs already exist and would seem to be sufficient to advertise the property to travelers along the Capital Beltway (I-495/95). The development district signage standards do not permit large signage oriented to the Capital Beltway unless a major employment or GSA campus is constructed in the Greenbelt Metro North Core area, and even then such signage is limited to that site. Large signs catering to fast-moving traffic on a freeway the size of the Capital Beltway are contrary to the emphasis of the sector plan and development district standards on high-quality development that enhances the pedestrian and transit-rider experience.

Comment: Some of the issues raised by the Community Planning Division staff have been addressed through conditions of approval included in the Recommendation section of this report as necessary. However, as discussed in Finding 7 above, staff finds that a certain amount of new freestanding signage may be provided on-site to create the sense of place desired by the applicant, without substantially impairing the implementation of the sector plan.

- b. **Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE)**—In a memorandum dated July 19, 2013, DPIE stated that they had no objection to this project for new signage only.

- c. **Prince George's County Police Department**—In a memorandum dated July 3, 2013, the Police Department indicated that they reviewed the DSP and there are no crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) related concerns in regards to the placement or movement of the banners and signs.
 - d. **Prince George's County Health Department**—In a memorandum dated July 19, 2013, the Environmental Engineering Program of the Health Department stated that they had no comments or recommendations on the subject application.
 - e. **Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO)**—At the time of the writing of this staff report, PEPCO has not provided comments on the subject application.
 - f. **City of College Park**—At the time of the writing of this staff report, the City of College Park has not provided comments on the subject application.
 - g. **Town of Berwyn Heights**—At the time of the writing of this staff report, the Town of Berwyn Heights has not provided comments on the subject application.
 - h. **City of Greenbelt**—At the time of the writing of this staff report, the City of Greenbelt has not submitted official comments on the subject application, but staff was notified that the City Council did vote to approve the DSP, with conditions, on October 28, 2013, and a representative will attend the Planning Board hearing to present their comments.
13. The subject application, if revised as conditioned, adequately takes into consideration the requirements of the D-D-O Zone and the Greenbelt Sector Plan and SMA. One of the amendments to the development district standards, as discussed in Finding 7 above, required for this development would benefit the development and the development district as required by Section 27-548.25(c) of the Zoning Ordinance, and would not substantially impair implementation of the sector plan.

Based on the foregoing and as required by Section 27-285(b)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance, the detailed site plan, if revised as conditioned, represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9, of the Prince George's County Code without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and recommends APPROVAL of the application as follows:

- A. Staff recommends APPROVAL of the alternative development district standards for:
 - 1. Page 229—A maximum of one freestanding or monument sign permitted for each residential development exceeding 200 dwelling units (to allow two new aquatic center monument signs and an additional 21 new freestanding pole banner signs).

- B. Staff recommends DISAPPROVAL of the alternative development district standard for:
1. Page 229—The maximum gross area of building-mounted signage shall not exceed ten percent of the façade area of the commercial portion of the building (to allow two proposed building-mounted banners that have an area up to 23 percent of the façade area).
- C. Staff recommends APPROVAL of Detailed Site Plan DSP-12061 for Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station, subject to the following conditions:
1. Prior to certification, the applicant shall revise the plans as follows or provide the specified documentation:
 - a. Revise the detailed site plan (DSP) as follows:
 - (1) Correct all notes, tables, plans, and labels to consistently indicate the number and types of signs.
 - (2) Revise Sheet 3 to remove all details for signs that are already constructed and not proposed with this DSP.
 - (3) Remove the proposed street sign detail and all reference to it on the plan and in the notes.
 - (4) Label the material, which shall be durable and high-quality, of each sign type on the plan.
 - (5) Label the area of each proposed sign on the detail sheet.
 - (6) Remove the two proposed building-mounted banner signs from the plan.
 - (7) Label each sign's setback from the nearest curb line, which shall be no less than two feet.
 - (8) Revise the freestanding pole banner signs such that there are a maximum of three along Cherrywood Lane, a maximum of three along Breezewood Drive, and a maximum of four along Edmonston Road. Additionally, pole banner signs along these rights-of-way shall be located a minimum of 500 feet from any monument sign or other pole banner sign.