

July 30, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Acting Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: James Jordan, Urban Designer

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan, SP-96052/04
College Park Market Place

The Urban Design Section has completed its coordination and review of the Detailed Site Plan SP-96052/04. The following analysis, evaluation and findings lead to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions, as described in the Recommendation Section of this report.

BACKGROUND

The Detailed Site Plan for College Park Market Place was originally approved by the PGCPB Resolution No. 97-6 on January 30, 1997 with twelve (12) conditions. The purpose of the subject revision, SP-96052/04, is solely to request a revision to Condition No. 8.

FINDINGS

Based on the analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design staff offers the following findings:

1. Location: The site is located in the southwest quadrant of the Route 1 and I-495 interchange between Route 1, I-495, and Cherry Hill Road. The subject property is bounded by I-495 to the north, Route 1 to the east, Cherry Hill Road to the south, and a portion of M-NCPPC park property zoned O-S to the south.
2. The Existing Development: The subject property is an integrated shopping center and consists of one multi-tenant building of approximately 243,890 square feet and one free standing pad site of approximately 7,342 square feet in size. Two anchor tenants have been identified in the main shopping center as The Home Depot and Shoppers Club. The freestanding pad site consists of Crestar Bank, Starbucks Coffee, AT & T Phone Store, and Blockbuster Video. Parking is accommodated by surface parking and a garage. Access to the subject development is via Cherry Hill Road.

3. Background: The District Council rezoned the entire property from the R-R and the C-2 zones to the C-S-C and C-O zones, per A-9930, on July 25, 1983, and subsequently rezoned the C-O Zone portion of the property to C-S-C Zone, per A-9863, on November 9, 1993.
4. The Approved Preliminary Plat: The Preliminary Plat of Subdivision, 4-84053, for the subject property was reviewed and approved with conditions by the Prince George's County Planning Board on May 10, 1984.
5. The Approved Detailed Site Plan: The Detailed Site Plan for the subject property was reviewed and approved with conditions by the Prince George's County Planning Board on January 9, 1997.
6. The site development data for SP-96052/04 will be identical to that of previous approvals and is as follows:

College Park Marketplace
Detailed Site Plan SP-96052/04

Zone	C-S-C
Gross/Net Tract Area	21.5 acres
Proposed Use	Shopping Center
Gross Floor Area	251,232 square feet
Parking Required	1,005 spaces
Parking Provided	1,148 spaces
Loading Required	5 spaces
Loading Provided	12 spaces

7. All findings and conditions previously approved with SP-96052, SP-96052/01, /02, and /03 not specifically mentioned herein as being deleted or revised shall remain applicable and in full force. In particular, the proposed revision to Condition 8 represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines, without requiring unreasonable costs and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use.
8. Condition 8 as previously approved by the Planning Board is as follows:
 8. **Prior to signature approval, the Sign Plan shall be revised to show materials and colors for both monument and free standing signs, consistent with the colors and materials of the building facade. Signage shall be prohibited from any elevation other than the front and rear facade of the main shell building and shall be restricted to the colors red and white, with the exception of the Home Depot sign. The plans shall be revised to delete signage shown on The Home Depot's west elevation. The use of box signs shall be limited to three signs for tenant Shopper's food Warehouse, i.e., one Shopper's circular logo and two "club Price; No Club Fees" signs, and one for the tenant Home Depot, i.e., to specify "Maryland's Home Improvement Warehouse." The use of roof signs and back lit translucent awning signs shall be**

prohibited.

9. The applicant's proposed modification to Condition 8 is as follows (Underlining denotes proposed new language.):

8. “Prior to signature approval, the Sign Plan shall be revised to show materials and colors for both monument and free standing signs, consistent with the colors and materials of the building facade. Signage shall be prohibited from any elevation other than the front and rear facade of the main shell building and shall be restricted to the colors red and white, or other acceptable colors as approved by the Planning Board or its designee with the exception of the Home Depot sign. The plans shall be revised to delete signage shown on The Home Depot's west elevation. The use of box signs shall be limited to three signs for tenant Shopper's food Warehouse, i.e., one Shopper's circular logo and two “club Price; No Club Fees” signs, and one for the tenant Home Depot, i.e., to specify “Maryland's Home Improvement Warehouse.” The use of roof signs and back lit translucent awning signs shall be prohibited.”

The requested amendment to the said condition is based on the applicant's contention that the condition's limitation of signage colors to red and white is too restrictive, and does not allow for a wide array of prospective tenants, many of which may have trademark logo's, signage, and colors. Furthermore, to limit the signage to any particular colors would burden the applicant with having to apply for a revision to the plan for approval of additional colors every time a new tenant occupies space within the shopping center. This would result in an inordinate amount of revisions for color/signage approval. The applicant states that “due to national and corporate logos and colors we need to have the flexibility” to allow for a range of tenants.

The shopping center is constructed and the majority of the leasable spaces are occupied, with the few remaining spaces under contract for tenants. Condition 8 has been enforced thus far, but prospective tenants', specifically Blockbuster and AT & T, logo's and trademark signage have required that the proposed amendment to the condition be requested. All signage, notwithstanding color or logo, will have a consistent location per the approved and revised Condition 8. In light of the need for flexibility, provision of a less cumbersome review process, and enhancement of the applicant's ability to attract a wide range of tenants, staff does not believe that retaining the previously approved language of the subject condition is appropriate. The signage and logo coloring is clearly a subjective issue and should be left primarily to the discretion of the tenant and property owner, with review by staff as a final quality control measure. Aesthetically, it is significantly more important to ensure that all signage be consistently located on facades throughout the shopping center. The overall functionality, quality, and appearance of the shopping center will not be altered if additional signage colors are allowed.

The staff recommends approval of the requested revisions, noting that they do not diminish the overall quality of the approved shopping center.

10. The subject plan was referred to the City of College Park and was approved on February 22, 2000. In a letter (Schum to Hewlett) dated March 7, 2000 the city provided the fol-

lowing additional language at the end of the condition to separate facade and freestanding signs:

“Notwithstanding the above language, the shopping center’s free standing signs shall be further restricted as follows; the sign for the smaller tenants permitted on Baltimore Avenue shall be limited to the colors red, white and black and all lettering contained in such panel sign will be consistent in height and will not exceed 8 inches high.”

Staff does not object to the additional language, and it is recommended that Condition 8 be revised to include the said language.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation, analysis and findings of this report, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Detailed Site Plan SP-96052/04, which modifies Condition 8 of Planning Board Resolution No. 97-6, with the following condition. All previously approved conditions not specifically deleted or amended herein shall remain in full force.

8. Prior to signature approval, the Sign Plan shall be revised to show materials and colors for both monument and free standing signs, consistent with the colors and materials of the building facade. Signage shall be prohibited from any elevation other than the front and rear facade of the main shell building and shall be restricted to the colors red and white, or other acceptable colors as approved by the Planning Board or its designee with the exception of the Home Depot sign. The plans shall be revised to delete signage shown on The Home Depot's west elevation. The use of box signs shall be limited to three signs for tenant Shopper's food Warehouse, i.e., one Shopper's circular logo and two “club Price; No Club Fees” signs, and one for the tenant Home Depot, i.e., to specify “Maryland's Home Improvement Warehouse.” The use of roof signs and back lit translucent awning signs shall be prohibited. Notwithstanding the above language, the shopping center’s free standing signs shall be further restricted as follows; the sign for the smaller tenants permitted on Baltimore Avenue shall be limited to the colors red, white and black and all lettering contained in such panel sign will be consistent in height and will not exceed 8 inches high.