



# THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Office of the Planning Director  
Prince George's County Planning Department

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301-952-3595

January 14, 2014

Ms. Cheryl Kelly, Urban Planner  
Urban Design and Plan Review Division  
National Capital Planning Commission  
401 9<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20004

## **RE: US Army – Adelphi Laboratory Center Car Ports (MR-1325A)**

Dear Ms. Kelly:

Prince George's County Planning Department staff appreciates the opportunity to respond to your request for comments on the US Army Adelphi Laboratory Center project to construct car ports. The proposed construction includes three car port structures with photo-voltaic solar panels installed on the rooftops on three existing parking lots. We would like to submit comments pertaining to environmental, historic, and urban design aspects of the project.

The proposed project will create minimal environmental impacts and there will be no increase in impervious surface due to the solar panel design. Water that is in either liquid or frozen form will not increase any stormwater impact, and no additional air quality or noise impacts are foreseen, other than during construction. Staff recommends that the applicant contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Program and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to obtain specific information regarding impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species. Community Planning Division staff recommend adding some plant material, specifically trees, in the large open space between Powder Mill Road and the first parking lot to help screen the proposed car ports.

The proposed project does not include any impacts to any historic sites, historic resources, or documented properties in the vicinity of or within the boundaries of the project area. One archeological site was identified near the site of Parking Lot #601, but the proposed project will not impact any significant archeological resources. In addition, regarding urban design recommendations, the installation of the car ports will not affect existing landscaping or the number of parking spaces provided at the facility.

Enclosed are three memoranda that include the full evaluations and comments summarized above from the Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Sections of the Countywide Planning Division, and the Urban Design Section of the Development Review Division.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to comment on the proposed project to construct three car ports with photo-voltaic solar panels. If you should have any additional questions or need further information, please contact Fatimah Hasan, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division, at 301-952-3580 or via email at [Fatimah.Hasan@ppd.mncppc.org](mailto:Fatimah.Hasan@ppd.mncppc.org).

Sincerely,



Fern V. Piret  
Planning Director

Enclosures

c: Derick Berlage, Chief, Countywide Planning Division  
Maria Martin, Planning Supervisor, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Fatimah Hasan, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Christine Osei, Mandatory Referral Project Manager, Special Projects Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Howard Berger, Planning Supervisor, Historic Preservation Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Katina Shoulars, Planning Supervisor, Environmental Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division  
Ruth Grover, Planner Coordinator, Urban Design Section, Development Review Division  
Teri Bond, Planning Supervisor, Community Planning Division  
Redis C. Floyd, Clerk of the Council, Prince George's County Council



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Prince George's County Planning Department  
Development Review Division

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December 23, 2013

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Christine Osei, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section

**VIA:** Ruth Grover, Planner Coordinator, Urban Design Section

**FROM:** Jill Kosack, Senior Planner, Urban Design Section

**SUBJECT:** Mandatory Referral MR-1325A - US Army Adelphi Lab Center – Car Ports

The Urban Design Section has reviewed materials provided in support of MR-1325A, US Army Adelphi Lab Center – Car Ports, a project which proposes to install photovoltaic (solar) panels on the roofs of car ports in three existing surface parking lots which are part of the US Army Adelphi Laboratory Center. The subject site, which is zoned R-O-S (Reserved Open Space), is located in both Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, approximately 1,230-feet southwest of the intersection of Cherry Hill Road and Powder Mill Road. The subject property is largely wooded, but also developed with multiple separate building and parking compounds.

The subject referral is being provided in accordance with the Mandatory Referral review process as detailed in Maryland Annotated Code, the Land Use Article, Section 7-112 and Section 27-294 of the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance. Based on our review of the submitted information, we offer the following comments:

The current proposal is to install above-ground solar panels on carports above three existing surface parking lots to help meet the site's energy needs. Two of the lots are located internal to the property, surrounded by existing woods and not visible from any surrounding properties or public rights-of-way. The third parking lot is located in the southwestern corner of the property within approximately 350 feet of the right-of-way of Powder Mill Road, but largely within Montgomery County. The third parking lot would be minimally visible from the public right-of-way due to distance and the existing structures between the two, including an approximately eight-foot tall black metal picket security fence. The installation will not affect existing landscaping or the number of parking spaces provided at the facility.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the above analyses, the Urban Design Section has no specific recommendations for the above application.





**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Prince George's County Planning Department  
Historic Preservation Section**

**(301) 952-3680  
www.mncppc.org**

December 19, 2013

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Fatimah Hasan, Planner Coordinator  
Special Projects Section  
Countywide Planning Division

**FROM:** Howard Berger, Supervisor  
Jennifer Stabler, Archeology Planner Coordinator  
Historic Preservation Section  
Countywide Planning Division

**SUBJECT: MR-1325A U.S Army Adelphi Lab Center- Car Ports**

**Background**

The Adelphi Lab Center Car Ports project addresses the installation of solar panels within three existing parking areas on property located in both Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Historic Preservation staff has reviewed the project plan for impacts to historical and archeological resources within Prince George's County.

*Historic Preservation*

There are no Prince George's County Historic Sites, Historic Resources, or documented properties in the vicinity of or within the boundaries of the project area.

*Archeology*

One archeological site, 18PR465 – a Late Archaic short-term camp, lithic quarry and extraction site – was identified near the site of parking lot 601. No further work was recommended on the site. This proposal will not impact any significant archeological resources.



Countywide Planning Division  
Environmental Planning Section

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December 19, 2013

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Fatimah Hasan, Planner Coordinator, Special Projects Section

VIA: Katina Shoulars, Supervisor, Environmental Planning Section

FROM: Chuck Schneider, Senior Planner, Environmental Planning Section

SUBJECT: MR-1325A US Army - Adelphi Lab Center Car Ports with Rooftop Solar Panels  
White Oak Federal Research Center

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the application for Mandatory Review dated December 2013 for the US Army Adelphi Lab Center Car Ports with Rooftop Solar Panels Project on the White Oak Federal Research Center. The proposed action was evaluated to determine the potential for significant adverse impacts on environmental resources, including but not limited to air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, and biological resources. The following commentary is based on a review of the Mandatory Review application package and an interpretation of aerial photographs and maps. A site visit was not conducted. The following comments are provided for your consideration:

**Proposed Activity or Action**

The project is for construction of three car port structures with solar panels on the top. These structures are proposed to be constructed on top of three existing asphalt parking areas. There are three separate parking areas within the overall site that will have these solar carport structures. These solar panels will generate power which will be used by the US Army Adelphi Lab Center. According the US Army Adelphi Lab Center Car Ports with Rooftop Solar Panels Project application package, the three car ports will impact existing impervious areas. The car port structures will be installed on existing parking areas. These car ports will have metal poles located along a parking row to support a rooftop structure. This rooftop structure will contain many solar panel tiles that have gaps at sections to let water (frozen or liquid) fall to the existing asphalt pavement. These solar panels will collect the sun's rays and provide power to the White Oak Federal Research Project.

**Background**

The project areas are located on the White Oak Federal Research Center Campus in the US Army Adelphi Lab Center facility which borders both Prince George's County and Montgomery County land. There are three existing parking lot facilities located along Federal Drive within the Army facility. These parking lot facilities are identified as Parking Lot 202, Parking Lot 404, and Parking Lot 601. A large portion of Parking Lot 202 is mostly located in Montgomery County and has a small parking area within Prince

George's County. Parking Lot 403 is located entirely within Montgomery County and Parking Lot 601 is located entirely within Prince George's County. Woodland areas surround these parking areas along with the adjacent associated lab building. According to PGAtlas.com, these existing parking areas are not located within any mapped regulated environmental features, 100-year floodplain, or marlboro clay. No information was provided regarding specimen trees. The website, PGAtlas.com, identified all three sites adjacent to woodlands that have the potential to be forest interior bird habitat areas. This bird habitat information is from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources mapping of the Sensitive Species Project Review Area. Parking Lot 601 is partially located within a sensitive species review area. No information was provided for the rare, threatened or endangered species (RTE) that is mapped within the vicinity of the site. The site has overland stormwater sheet flow which drains to an unnamed tributary of Paint Branch, in the Anacostia watershed, within the Potomac River basin. The site's topography is varying; generally flat in the projects existing parking lot areas.

### **Environmental Review**

#### **Existing Parking Lot #202**

Approximately 117,960 square feet of the existing parking area is located within Montgomery County and 20,000 square feet is located within Prince George's County. According to the 2011 aerial imaging on PGAtlas.com, the project area does not appear to have any adjacent visible stormwater management pond structures. Stormwater appears to be directed by sheet flow to adjacent street inlets that direct untreated water to the adjacent unnamed stream.

No woodlands or regulated features will be disturbed as part of this project. The construction of the solar car port structure will create minimal impacts because the entire disturbance will take place over existing impervious surface areas. The only noise from this project/structure will be during construction and the impact time will be short and minimal. There will be no increase in impervious surface area due to the solar panel design. Water that is in either liquid or frozen form will not increase the stormwater impact to the existing parking lot. No additional air quality impacts are proposed other than during construction.

#### **Existing Parking Lot #404**

Parking Lot 404 is located entirely within Montgomery County and no in-depth review is required; however, a minimal review was conducted. Stormwater appears to be directed by sheet flow to adjacent street inlets that direct untreated water to the adjacent unnamed stream.

No woodlands or regulated features will be disturbed as part of this project. The construction of the solar car port structure will create minimal impacts because the entire disturbance will take place to existing impervious surface areas. The only noise from this project/structure will be during construction and the impact time will be short and minimal. There will be no increase in impervious surface area due to the solar panel design. Water that is in either liquid or frozen form will not increase the stormwater impact to the existing parking lot. No additional air quality impacts are proposed other than during construction.

### **Existing Parking Lot #601**

The existing parking area is approximately 64,100 square feet in size and found entirely within Prince George's County. According to 2011 aerial imaging on PGAtlas.com, the project area does not have any adjacent visible stormwater management pond structures. Stormwater appears to be directed by overland sheet flow to the adjacent down gradient unnamed stream.

A small portion of the existing parking is located within a Sensitive Species Review Area. No information was provided as part of this package as to what the RTE species is within the vicinity of the site. It is unknown if this proposed solar car port project will affect the plant or animal species. It is recommended that the applicant contact the Maryland Department of the Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Program and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to obtain specific information regarding RTE species.

No woodlands or regulated features will be disturbed as part of this project. The construction of the solar car port structures will create minimal impacts because the entire disturbance will take place to existing impervious surface areas. The only noise from this project/structure will be during construction and that impact time will be short and minimal. There will be no increase in impervious surface area due to the solar panel design. Water that is in either liquid or frozen form will not increase the stormwater impact to the existing parking lot. No additional air quality impacts are proposed other than during construction.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the US Army Adelphi Lab Center Car Ports with Rooftop Solar Panels, White Oak Federal Research Center Project application package. It is recommended that the applicant contact the Maryland Department of the Natural Heritage Program and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to obtain specific information regarding RTE species. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact the Environmental Planning Section at 301-952-3650.