



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

DETAILED SITE PLAN SPECIAL PERMIT

**DSP-06024
SP-060002**

Application	General Data
Project Name: EZ Storage, Brentwood Location: Northeastern quadrant of the intersection of Rhode Island and Utah Avenues. Applicant/Address: Siena Corporation 8221 Snowden River Parkway Columbia, MD 21045	Date Accepted: 7/12/2006
	Planning Board Action Limit: 10/20/2006
	Plan Acreage: 1.44
	Zone: U-L-I & D-D-O
	Dwelling Units: 1
	Square Footage: 148,200
	Planning Area: 68
	Tier: Developed
	Council District: 02
	Municipality: Brentwood
	200-Scale Base Map: 205NE03

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
Construction of a 148,200 square foot consolidated storage facility in the U-L-I/D-D-O overlay zone. The project includes a 1,310 square foot office, a 1,483 square foot residence, 5,926 square feet of retail space, 137,588 square feet (or 1,050 units) of consolidated storage and 4,708 square feet (or 15 units) of artist's studios.	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: 05/03/2006 (CB-12-2003)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site and Notice of Hearing Mailed: 09/12/2006

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Ruth E. Grover, A.I.C.P.	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

September 26, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Steve Adams, Urban Design Supervisor

FROM: Ruth Grover, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan, DSP-06024-EZ Storage—Brentwood
Special Permit SP-060002

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

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

- a. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the U-L-I/D-D-O Zone.
- b. The 2004 *Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Prince George's County Gateway Arts District*.
- c. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance.
- d. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

1. **Request:** The subject application requests the construction of a 148,200 square foot consolidated storage facility in the U-L-I/D-D-O overlay zone. More particularly, the project includes a 1,310-square-foot office, 5,926 square feet of ground-floor retail use, a 1,483 square foot residence, 137,588 square feet (or 1,050 units) of consolidated storage, and 4,708 square feet (or 15 units) of artists' studios. It is requested that the mix of retail and artist studio use be permitted to flex somewhat to market demand.

2. **Development Data Summary**

Zone	EXISTING M-U-I/D-D-O	PROPOSED M-U-I /D-D-O
Use(s)	Vacant	Consolidated storage, with an office, residential, retail, and artists' studios
Acreage	1.44	1.44
Lots	5	5
Building Square Footage/GFA	14,456	148,200

OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

	REQUIRED	PROPOSED
Total parking spaces	64	34*
of which handicapped spaces	2	2
Loading spaces	6	6

* See Finding 8 below for discussion of parking requirements

3. **Location:** The site is in Planning Area 68, Council District 2. More specifically, it is located at 4301 Rhode Island Avenue in Brentwood.
4. **Surroundings and Use:** The subject property is bounded to the northeast by a post office, with several single-family residences beyond, to the southeast by warehousing and automotive uses, to the southwest by industrial use, to the northwest by Rhode Island Avenue and commercial use beyond.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The site is the subject of the Holladay Company Addition to Brentwood Plat. Applicant plans to pursue a separate subdivision action to consolidate the five lots to one. The site is also the subject of approved Stormwater Concept 6349-2006-00. The stormwater concept approval was issued on May 8, 2006, and will remain in effect for three years, or until May 8, 2009.
6. **Design Features:** The site's primary access is a two-way access from Utah Avenue, with a secondary, one-way exit to 41st Street. Parking and loading are located in a smaller lot—accessed from Utah Avenue and adjacent to the office for the project—and a larger lot accessed from the smaller parking lot and exiting onto 41st street. The larger lot, gated both at its entrance from the smaller lot on Utah Avenue and at its exit to 41st Street, offers direct access to the units of consolidated storage and the residence included in the project. Landscaping is provided along the project's three frontages and in the parking area. In addition to offering consolidated storage, the project is designed to include an office, a residence, retail space and artists' studios units along the project's Rhode Island Avenue and 41st Street frontages.

Architecture for the project may be unprecedented in its design of consolidated storage facilities in Prince George's County. Retail/studio space is offered on the ground floor along Rhode Island Avenue and 41st Street, with the units of consolidated storage located above. The building is proposed to be constructed of a textured red split-faced concrete masonry unit (CMU) with accent bands along the roofline, the base of the uppermost story, and the building's base (the first two stories), which is to be constructed of white polished CMU. Red, glazed tile squares offer additional detailing on the uppermost story, while a red frame and clear glass storefront system with awnings offer additional detailing at the building's base. Signage for the project is limited to wall signage and decorative banners along the project's Rhode Island and Utah Street frontages.

The wall signage is limited to the following:

Front Elevation (near the corner of Utah Avenue):

88-square-foot main identification sign (“ezStorage”);

90-square-foot secondary “identification” signs (“self storage” and “climate controlled”).

Right Elevation (near the corner of Rhode Island Avenue):

88-square-foot main identification sign (“ezStorage”);

90-square-foot secondary identification signs (“self storage” and “climate controlled”).

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **Zoning Ordinance:** The application has been reviewed against the requirements for use and development standards contained in the Gateway Arts District sector plan because the project is located in the U-L-I/D-D-O district. Please see finding 8 below for a more detailed discussion of compliance.
8. **The 2004 Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Prince George’s County Gateway Arts District:**
 - a. The proposed uses on the site are sanctioned by the Gateway Arts District sector plan. Specifically, it provides that both consolidated storage facilities are specifically permitted as a principal use and artist studios as an accessory use in the arts production and entertainment character area of the Gateway Arts District. A mix of retail uses are also permitted in the arts production and entertainment character area of the Gateway Arts District as more particularly described in the permitted uses table contained in the approved sector plan (pp.159-197).
 - b. This plan meets most of the development standards expressed in the Gateway Arts District sector plan but several amendments are requested by the applicant.
- **Land Use and Permitted Use Table**—Page 184 provides that consolidated storage facilities in the APE are provided as special permit uses that require a detailed site plan. Page 160 provides that artist studios as an accessory to an allowed use in the APE are special permit uses that require a detailed site plan. The proposed retail square footage and artist studios are generally permitted uses in the APE.

The applicant proposes 1,050 individual storage units, 5,380 sf of street-level retail space, and eight artist studio bays.

Staff comment: The proposed development, with the addition of street-level retail uses and artist studio spaces, fulfills the intent of the APE character area in Brentwood to provide uses that have the effect of activating the street while allowing a light industrial use that serves the business interests of the community. This development may also act as a catalyst to rethink development possibilities in ways that fulfill the intent of the APE character areas in the Gateway Arts District. It is my understanding that the applicant will enter into a master lease agreement with the Gateway Community Development Corporation (CDC) to manage the retail and artist studio leases. The master lease arrangement should be for 10–15 years to ensure retail and studio space needs are maintained over time and to ensure implementation of the arts district as envisioned.

- **Building and Streetscape Siting (Table 1, page 135)**—The intent of the development standards for a “build-to” line rather than a setback is to create a consistent street wall

and a pleasant, inviting streetscape along commercial and mixed-use streets and a coherent visual appearance along neighborhood residential streets. The approved sector plan established a development standard of 15 feet from the face-of-curb with an allowable variation of ± 5 feet for the subject property along Alternative US 1 (see Table 2, page 139, Approved Sector Plan). Table 2 also provides that the build-to line from the face-of-curb will be seven feet with a $\pm$ variation on streets with on-street parking.

The applicant's build-to line on Alternative US 1, Rhode Island Avenue, complies with the standard per Table 2 for the APE. The applicant proposes to increase the build-to lines on Utah Street and 41st Street to provide for off-street parking and loading. The applicant will provide a four-foot-high masonry wall topped with an ornamental railing five feet behind the R-O-W line on 41st Street.

Staff comment: These proposed departures from the standards will not impair the integrity of the sector plan. Given the 30-foot right-of-way of 41st Street and Utah Street and the existing truck traffic that must negotiate these streets, the greater set back allows for truck circulation with on-street parking while implementing a much enhanced streetscape.

- **Building and Streetscape Siting (page 137, 9)**—This standard provides that building sidewalls should abut the sidewalls of adjacent buildings.

Applicant: This standard is not possible to meet if access is to be provided from Utah Street to the artist studio bays and the public storage component at the rear of the property.

Staff comment: This variation does not impair the integrity of the sector plan, meets the intent of the development standards to create a coherent visual appearance along Alternative US 1, and wraps the corner at Utah Street, creating a far superior entryway into the APE character area.

- **Access and Circulation**—Standard 5, page 138 of the sector plan, provides that each lot or parcel shall have a maximum of two access driveways to parking from a public street. Standard 6, page 138 of the sector plan, provides that access to parking and the rear of the lot or parcel shall be located on a side street or alley and shall be a maximum of 18 feet wide.

Applicant: The applicant provides a 25-foot-wide access to the parking at the rear of the site from Utah Street and a 14-foot-wide access from 41st Street.

Staff comment: This variation does not impair the integrity of the sector plan

- **Parking and Loading**—Standard 1 provides that parking for an artist studio shall be provided at the rate of one parking space per 2,500 sf of gross floor area. Eight artist studios of 300 sf each and one bay at 246 sf equals 2,646 sf of space resulting in a need for two parking spaces.

Regarding parking for the proposed 5,380 sf of retail space; Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance requires one space for every 150 sf up to the first 3,000 sf and one space for every 200 sf of space above the first 3,000 sf. The result is a requirement of 32 retail spaces.

The proposed 1,032 unit public storage units require one parking space for every 50 storage units, or 21 parking spaces. The additional 1,285 sf of office space dedicated to the storage use result in the need for 4 parking spaces (4 parking spaces for every 1,000 sf of office space). Two parking spaces are required for the resident manager of the storage facility.

The total number of parking spaces required per Section 27-568(a) for all the uses is 61 parking spaces.

Standard 7 (page 139, 1) provides that if a parking district is established for the Arts District or individual municipalities the minimum number of off-street parking spaces for uses other than artist studio, residential and live/work shall be reduced 50 percent from the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces in accordance with Section 27-658(a) of the Zoning Ordinance. The minimum number of off-street surface parking spaces permitted for each land use type shall comply with Section 27-568(a) of the Zoning Ordinance. Departures from Section 27-568(a) will require a detailed site plan review.

The applicant provides 34 parking spaces at the rear of the site. An additional 24 on-street parking spaces exist along Utah Street and 41st Street. A traffic engineer will evaluate parking requirements to determine how the hours of operation, customer shopping patterns, and artist use of studio space reduce the level of parking demand between the three uses.

Staff comment: The provisional Gateway Arts District sector plan proposed that the minimum number of off-street parking spaces for uses other than artist studio, residential and live/work should be reduced 50 percent from the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces in accordance with Section 27-568(a) of the Zoning Ordinance. At the public hearing on the plan the City of Hyattsville recommended that the standard be changed to condition the parking reduction to the establishment of a parking district. The City of Hyattsville was concerned that the reduction in parking would result in parking on local residential streets in the City of Hyattsville. The plan was modified to reflect their concern. However, in this case, the reduction of parking spaces to 50 percent of what is required per the Zoning Ordinance falls in line with the preliminary proposal, which was not objected to by the Town of Brentwood during the public hearing process. Also, it appears the mix of uses on this site results in complementary parking demand which makes the 50 percent reduction of parking spaces realistic.

The applicant provides 34 of the required 61 parking spaces, which is 55 percent of the requirement. This variation does not impair the integrity of the sector plan and meets the intent of the development standards to provide adequate parking and encourage shared parking without encroaching upon adjacent neighborhoods and to avoid unsightly expanses of asphalt and reduce the negative environmental impacts associated with impervious surfaces. The proposal does not meet the minimum parking requirements for 61 (not 63) parking spaces. The proposal provides 34 of the required 61 parking spaces. The additional 24 on-street parking spaces (which are largely not used on weekends and evenings when the artist studios and retail uses would be most heavily used) would bring the number of parking spaces to 58 in which case there would be a deficiency of only three parking spaces. Thus, the proposed development does not impair the integrity of the plan but rather provides development that activates the street with pedestrian uses at the street level.

The Gateway Arts District sector plan envisioned parallel parking on both sides of Rhode

Island Avenue. Since Rhode Island Avenue is maintained by the State Highway Administration (SHA), they must provide approval to allow parallel parking. The provision of on-street parallel parking on Rhode Island Avenue enhances the pedestrian-oriented uses and the overall revitalization of this area.

Standard 3, page 140 of the sector plan, provides that loading facilities shall be located at the rear of the building and accessed from a side street or alley.

The applicant provides loading space at the rear of the building with access via Utah Street.

Staff comment: The applicant meets this standard.

- **Building Height**—Standard 2 on page 143 of the sector plan is the only standard in this section that applies to this proposal and provides that commercial buildings on US 1 should have a minimum height of 18 feet.

The applicant proposes an 80-foot building height on the southeast and southwest corners of the building. The balance of the building will be 66 feet high, excluding the parapet wall.

Staff comment: The applicant meets this standard.

- **Building Openings**—Standard 1 under entrances on page 144 provides that the main entrances of buildings with ground floor retail uses should be located on the primary street and address the sidewalk with appropriate lighting and signage. Buildings on corners should consider locating their main entrances on the corners.

Applicant: The proposal contains storefront entrances located on the primary streets with appropriate lighting and signage.

Staff comment: The applicant meets this standard.

Standard 2 under entrances on page 144 provides that the main entrances should be highlighted with a minimum of three design elements such as awnings, porticos, architectural recesses, windows (transom and sidelights), plantings, street furniture, and architectural details to highlight entrances to businesses.

Applicant: The proposal contains storefront entrances that are highlighted with storefront windows, transoms, awnings, and streetscape plantings.

Staff comment: The applicant meets this standard.

Standard 1 under windows on page 144 of the plan provides that the ground floor of commercial structures shall contain at least 60 percent two-way visually transparent material.

Applicant: The proposal contains storefront windows that are in excess of the 60 percent required along Rhode Island Avenue and Utah Street.

Staff comment: The applicant meets this standard.

- **Architecture**—Standards 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, and 11 on page 145 of the sector plan do not

apply. Standards 2, 4, 5, 7, 10 and 12 on page 145 of the sector plan are met. None of the standards pertinent to this proposal are mandatory. The intent of establishing these standards is to develop high quality, pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential structures compatible with the scale of adjacent neighborhoods and town centers through the use of texture, color and massing, and allowing for unique composition and details in new buildings while ensuring compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

Applicant: The proposed building on Rhode Island Avenue is 210 feet long and on Utah Street it is 120 feet long. Overall the façade of the building is broken up through the use of piers and by bumping out the corner of the building at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Utah Street. Additionally, the individual storefronts, with associated awnings and signage, will have the affect of breaking up the building at the street level.

Staff comment: Standard 5 provides that buildings exceeding 130 feet in frontage on any street should be articulated through massing, material, color, opening, and detail changes to appear as multiple buildings rather than one single building. While standards 2, 4, 5, 7, 10 and 12 on page 145 of the plan are met, a couple of suggestions are offered. The proposed building is in excess of 130 feet along Rhode Island Avenue and is broken up by horizontal bands of color and texture differences, which do not necessarily allow the building to be read as different buildings as per Standard 5. If the bands of color were vertical as opposed to horizontal they might allow the building to be read as multiple buildings.

- **Signage**—Standard 9 on page 147 of the sector Plan provides that sign area shall be in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, 27-613(c). Thus, the maximum sign area is 1.5 feet per linear foot of frontage to a maximum of 80 square feet.

Applicant: The main ID sign is 88 sf mounted on the parapet face of the building and is externally lit so light does not illuminate more than the area of the sign or spill onto the building façade. The secondary signs are 90 square feet. Sign band areas 18 inches in height are provided for anticipated retail and conform to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Five banners exist on the building piers.

Staff comment: The secondary signage is excessive and should be eliminated. Additionally, E-Z storage needs to develop a coordinated sign agreement for the tenants of the commercial space to provide signage that is of a professional quality, and that is not excessive so as not to clutter the building façade. For example a tenant may not install signage in the sign band location, as well as on an awning, a banner and the storefront window.

- **Landscape**—Standard 2 on page 143 of the sector plan provides that shade trees with a minimum of 2½-inch to 3-inch caliper shall be provided at the rate of one shade tree per every 5,000 sf of the gross site area.

Standard 3 on page 143 of the sector plan provides that parking lots shall be planted with one shade tree per every 10 parking spaces in bump-outs or islands.

Applicant: The applicant provides 13 shade trees, four of which are located in the parking area at the rear of the site, and nine that are provided in planter boxes along Rhode Island Avenue and Utah Street. Additional landscape material, including fifteen ornamental trees is provided on the site and in planter boxes next to the building entrance

on Utah Street.

Staff comment: The applicant exceeds the standards.

9. The proposed project meets the development standards established by the Gateway Arts District sector plan, with the following exceptions:

a. **Building and Streetscape Siting**

2. Development shall meet all applicable build-to lines with the optional variation shown in DDS Table 2. If the development is located on a street corner, it shall meet both build-to lines.

Comment: The applicant seeks to vary the required build to lines on Utah and 41st Streets to provide for off-street parking and loading. Applicant proposes to partially camouflage this deviation by provision of a four-foot high masonry wall topped with an ornamental railing five feet behind the ROW line on Utah and 41st Streets.

9. Building sidewalls should abut the sidewalls of adjacent buildings.

Comment: The proposed project, because of certain programmatic needs, does not abut the sidewalls of adjacent buildings. It is not possible to meet because access from Utah Street to the artist studio bays and public storage component at the rear of the property must be maintained.

b. **Access and Circulation**

1. Access to parking lots and loading facilities on adjacent properties should be shared.

Comment: The layout of the subject property and adjacent properties and the nature of the subject land use prevent the access to parking lots and loading facilities to be shared with the adjacent properties.

6. Access to parking and the rear of the lot or parcel shall be located on a side street or alley and should be a maximum of 18 feet wide.

Comment: The access is provided on the less heavily traveled streets, but the maximum allowed width is exceeded due to safety considerations due to trucks accessing the storage facility.

c. **Unit Design**

3. New residential units shall only be located above the ground floor.

Comment: The only residential unit in the project is the manager's dwelling, included in the project due to security concerns, is strategically placed on the ground floor.

d. **Signage**

9. Signs shall be lit externally, where the light does not exceed the area of the sign or

spill onto the building façade.

Comment: Although the proposed signage is internally lit, it is limited to wall signage and further limited by Recommended Condition 1k below.

e. **Parking and Loading**

1. Parking for an artist studio use shall be provided at the rate of one space per 2,500 square feet of gross floor area.

3. Parking for a residential or live/work use shall be a minimum of 1.0 on-site spaces per unit. Additional spaces up to a maximum of 3.5 spaces per unit may only be provided in an on-site parking structure.

7. The minimum number of off-street surface parking spaces for uses other than artist studio, residential, and live/work shall be reduced 50 percent from the minimum number of required off-street parking spaces in accordance with Section 27-568(a) of the Zoning Ordinance. If off-site shared parking is utilized in accordance with off-site shared parking requirements below, then this minimum for on-site surface parking may be waived. Properties within an established Parking District may have the minimum off-street parking requirements reduced or waived.

Comment: Total parking requirement for the project is 61 spaces and only 34 are indicated. Due to the constraints of the site and the nature of the proposed use, it would appear that the parking provided will be adequate for the project.

10. **Woodland Conservation Ordinance:** The site is exempt from the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance because it contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland and does not have a previously approved tree conservation plan. The Environmental Planning Section issued a standard letter of exemption for the site, dated May 12, 2006. That exemption is valid for two years, or until May 12, 2008. In the issued letter of exemption, the Environmental Planning Section stated that the site is exempt from the ordinance because the site contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodlands, and there is no previously approved tree conservation plan. Noting the size, zoning and proposed use of the property, the Environmental Planning Section stated that a tree conservation plan would not be required for the subject application.

11. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to appropriate agencies and internal divisions of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). The referral comments are summarized as follows:

- a. **Historic Preservation**—In comments dated August 10, 2006, the Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section stated that the proposed project would have no effect on historic resources.
- b. **Archeological Review**—In comments dated August 16, 2006, staff was informed that archeological comment on the subject project was deemed unnecessary.
- c. **Community Planning**—In comments dated August 23, 2006, the Community Planning Division stated that the application is not inconsistent with the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* Development Pattern policies for the Developed Tier. In addition, the division stated that the application conforms to the mixed-use-infill land use

recommendations of the Gateway Arts District sector plan as well as the development standards of the Gateway Arts District Development District Overlay Zone. More specifically, division staff offered the following:

GENERAL PLAN, MASTER PLAN AND SMA

2002 General Plan

The site is located in the Developed Tier on the Baltimore Avenue Corridor. The vision for corridors is mixed residential and non-residential uses at moderate to high densities and intensities, with a strong emphasis on transit-oriented development. This development should occur at local centers and other appropriate nodes within one-quarter mile of major intersections or transit stops along the corridor.

The vision for the Developed Tier is a network of sustainable transit supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density neighborhoods.

Gateway Arts District sector plan

- **Planning Area/Community:**
Planning Area 68/Brentwood.
- **Land Use:**
Arts Production and Entertainment character area land use.
- **Environmental:**
None identified.
- **Historic Resources:**
None identified.
- **Transportation:** The property fronts Rhode Island Avenue, which is designated as a four-lane major collector road.
- **Public Facilities:**
None identified.
- **Parks & Trails:**
The sector plan recommends a comprehensive system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along Baltimore Avenue (US 1).
- **SMA/Zoning:**
The Gateway Arts District sector plan retained the U-L-I and applied the Gateway Arts District Overlay Zone for the subject property.

PLANNING ISSUES

The Gateway Arts District sector plan governs development of this site. The master plan sets goals, objectives, and concepts based on the identification of seven character areas: 1) town center, 2) arts production and entertainment, 3) neighborhood arts and production, 4) multifamily residential community, 5) traditional residential neighborhoods, 6) neighborhood commercial, and 7) stream valley park. Each character area has its own set of development district standards, with the exception of the stream valley park character area. This property is in the Arts Production and Entertainment (APE) character area, which is described below:

Arts Production and Entertainment character areas overlay existing heavy and light industrially zoned land. These character areas supports a mix of arts, entertainment, artist live/work space, artist heavy production space, small-scale retail and commercial businesses, and entertainment uses. For a more detailed discussion of the project's

conformance to the development standards of the *Approved Sector Plan for the Gateway Arts District*.

- d. **Transportation**—In a memorandum dated August 31, 2006, the Transportation Planning Section stated that the proposed accesses from 41th Street and Utah Avenue are inadequate. The access to 41th Street is not sufficiently wide to meet the requirements for a two-way driveway. Additionally, they stated that while the access to Utah Avenue appears to be adequate, the access driveway to the main parking and loading areas serving this access point is also substandard and the access to the first loading bay from Utah Avenue is severely limited by the proposed raised concrete island. In conclusion, the Transportation Planning Division stated that the submitted detailed site plan is acceptable, if the plan is revised to correct the noted access deficiencies. Conditions requiring these revisions are included in the recommendation section of this report.
- e. **Subdivision**—In a memorandum dated July 26, 2006, the Subdivision Section stated that the project would be exempt from the preliminary plan of subdivision requirement if its development constituted at least ten percent of the total area of the site and had been constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991. They suggested that the applicant should vest the existing development prior to razing any existing structures in order to remain exempt under the statute. To accomplish this, they indicated that the applicant should revise the plan to provide data that indicate the gross floor area of all the existing structures on the site so that it can be determined if the gross floor area meets or exceeds the ten percent requirements: 144 acres of the site or the development or approximately 6,293 gross square feet. If the project could not be vested pursuant to this exemption, a new preliminary plan of subdivision would be required. The applicant has provided the requested information in Note 17 of the revised plan, confirming that a preliminary plan of subdivision is not required.
- f. **Trails**—In a memorandum dated August 3, 2006, the Senior Trails Planner recommended that a wide sidewalk be provided along the subject site's entire Rhode Island Avenue road frontage and that the applicant provide "Share the Road with a Bike" signs along Rhode Island Avenue. Conditions included below would carry out the Senior Trails Planner's recommendations.
- g. **Permits**—In a memorandum dated August 1, 2006, the Permit Review Section offered numerous comments that have either been addressed by revisions to the plans or are included in the recommended conditions below.
- h. **Environmental Planning**—In revised comments dated September 19, 2006, the Environmental Planning Section offered the following:

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed the requested information submitted on the above referenced detailed site plan and special permit for the EZ Storage (DSP-06024) and (SP060002) respectively, stamped as received by the Environmental Planning Section on September 14, 2006. The information provided was requested in a memo dated July 26, 2006 and was not received in time to be included in the analysis for the preparation of the technical staff report.

The additional information addresses how the plans are in conformance with the Gateway Arts District sector plan. The Environmental Planning Section recommends approval of

the Detailed Site Plan, DSP-06024 and SP-060002 subject to one environmental condition. This memorandum is an addendum to the previous memorandum dated July 26, 2006.

Environmental Issues Addressed in the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan

There are few specific recommendations pertaining to the environmental elements of the sector plan that relate to the subject property. The text in bold is from the plan and the plain text contains the comments regarding conformance. This site is currently cleared of vegetation, developed and predominantly paved. The applicable elements are addressed below.

1.c. **Stormwater Management: Existing regulations require adequate control of stormwater runoff (Subtitle 4, Division 2, Prince George's County Code).**

Comment: An approved stormwater management concept approval letter was recently submitted. The application involves the redevelopment of an existing developed site with 1.45 acres of impervious area. The proposed impervious area is 1.25 acres. Parking on the site has been reduced from 63 spaces to 34 spaces. A combination of impervious area reduction and water quality measures result in a 20 percent reduction in impervious surface area. Stormwater management review will be conducted by appropriate county agencies. No further information is required.

1.g. **Protection and Restoration of Woodlands: The Woodland Conservation Ordinance requires the conservation of woodlands through preservation, reforestation and afforestation of woodland and specimen trees by meeting minimum woodland conservation thresholds (Subtitle 25, Prince George's County Code)"**

Comment: The subject property is cleared, developed and contains no qualified woodland. The site is exempt from the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance because it contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland and does not have a previously approved Tree Conservation Plan. The site has an approved letter of exemption from the Environmental Planning Section, Countywide Planning Division, dated May 12, 2006. A copy of this letter was submitted with the review package. A copy of this letter of exemption must be submitted with future permit applications.

2. **Incorporate low-impact development design features and implement green building techniques that include the latest environmental technologies.**

This requirement has been addressed with the proposal of a bioretention facility, which will mimic the predevelopment runoff conditions. The statement stamped as received on September 14, 2006 does not contain a commitment to the use of green building materials or techniques.

Recommended Condition: Prior to signature approval, the following note shall be placed on the DSP: "Green building techniques such as the use of recycled building materials or building materials from sustainable resources shall be incorporated."

3. **Affirm county and state Smart Growth initiatives and the policies and strategies of the General Plan. New development and redevelopment should enhance existing green infrastructure elements such as wetlands, woodlands, open space, landscaped areas, street tree corridors, and sensitive species habitats. It should also establish open space linkages where they do not currently exist.**

Comment: The site does not contain any green infrastructure elements and it is not located in the green infrastructure network. Landscape and street trees are shown on the landscape plan.

4. **Seek opportunities to create new connected green infrastructure elements. New development or redevelopment project proposals should establish landscaped areas and open space connections, wherever possible.**

Comment: The subject property is not adjacent to a designated green corridor and does not contain woodlands, wetlands or sensitive species habitat. The tree cover requirements in Element 5 below will serve to address the landscaping provisions above.

5. **Require the following tree cover areas based on ten-year tree canopies: 10 percent tree cover on all properties not in the CBCA I-D-O overlay and within the industrial areas, 15 percent tree cover on property containing an L-D-O (limited development overlay), 20 percent tree cover within mixed-use or commercial areas, and 26 percent tree cover within residential areas. Establish street trees along main transportation corridors. Count trees planted in the public right-of-way but within 16 feet of a property line toward a development's tree coverage."**

Comment: The application proposes a commercial use, and as such the 20 percent tree cover requirement standard applies. The information package submitted September 14, 2006 included a tree cover calculation table that incorrectly adds 7 small ornamental trees and 12 medium shade trees when the plan shows 16 medium shade trees and no small ornamental shade trees. The total amount of tree cover is approximately the same—4,400 square feet, which does not meet the 20% requirement of the DDOZ.

The applicant has justified why the requirement of 20 percent tree cover for this site cannot be met. The project is an infill lot that will decrease the current impervious coverage and parking spaces. The build-to-the-street requirements of the DDOZ do not allow for setback areas that would provide additional green space and because this property essentially has building frontages on three sides, the amount of space available for tree planting is limited. Staff recommends approval of this reduction in the required amount of tree cover.

6. **Decrease impervious surfaces by sharing parking to the fullest extent, constructing green roofs, and following the County's Department of Environment Resources requirements to the fullest extent.**

Comment: The information recently submitted states that the current impervious areas on the site cover 1.45 acres and the proposed impervious areas are 1.25 acres. The decrease in impervious area has resulted in the creation of open spaces (grassed) in the parking lot area. This requirement has been met and no further information is required.

7. **Use micromanagement stormwater treatment methods on new development or redevelopment projects.**

Comment: The plan proposes the use of a bioretention area that is shown on the stormwater concept plan along 41st Avenue. This is an appropriate micromanagement technique.

The Environmental Planning Section has suggested a single condition that has been included in the recommendation section of this report.

- i. **Department of Environmental Planning (DER)**—In comments dated July 31, 2006, DER stated that the site plan for EZ Storage, Brentwood, DSP-06024 and SP-060002 is consistent with Approved Stormwater Concept 6349-2006.
- j. **Prince George's Fire Department**—In a memorandum dated August 6, 2006, the Prince George's Fire Department has offered comment on required access for fire apparatuses, private road design and the location and performance of fire hydrants.
- k. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**—In a memorandum dated August 2, 2006, WSSC stated that water and sewer is available to the site, that an onsite plan review package should be submitted and that the engineer should follow WSSC procedure for demolitions in order to obtain a county raze permit.
- l. **State Highway Administration (SHA)**—In a letter dated July 31, 2006, SHA stated that the potential number of vehicle trips generated by the proposed development does not appear to negatively impact traffic operations on the US 1 (Rhode Island Avenue)/Utah Avenue intersection.
- m. **Town of Colmar Manor**—On August 9, a representative of the Town of Colmar verbally informed staff that they would have no comment on the proposed project.
- n. **Town of Bladensburg**—At the time of this writing, the Town of Bladensburg has not offered comment on the subject project.
- o. **Town of Cottage City**—On August 9 a representative of the Town of Cottage City verbally informed staff that they would have no comment on the subject project.
- p. **Town of North Brentwood**—In a letter dated August 2, 2006, the Town of North Brentwood offered the following specific comments:
 - 1. The tone for new structures in the Gateway Arts District has been established with the construction of the Bunker Hill Fire Station. Brick, not recast concrete block, is desired for the building exterior. There are existing nearby structures, such as the Post Office, that are constructed with brick.

Comment: The applicant has provided information supporting the use of split-faced CMU for the project. The red color of the CMU provides a measure of continuity with the nearby post office. Please see Finding 12 for a further discussion of this issue.

- 2. The building should have artistic treatment with the use of columns of a

contrasting color in replacement to one solid color throughout the façade appearance. The use of Greek Revival architecture such as the use of Ionic or Doric columns should be considered. Window art should also be considered along with an appropriate Arts District mural for the rear wall, which would be the subject of a contest. The window trim should be more contrasting by using forest green or black, which matches the lamp posts. The window should have real windowsills.

Comment: These architectural suggestions were reviewed by the applicant but not utilized. Please see Finding 12 for a further discussion of the applicant's architectural choices.

3. The building should have street level parking on the Rhode Island side without narrowing the existing width of Rhode Island Avenue. This will encourage customer access.

Comment: Although the applicant expressed a willingness to dedicate right-of-way for the purpose of installing parking along Rhode Island Avenue, he asked not to be required to construct the parking. His concern was that lengthy SHA procedures might delay the completion of the project.

4. Building columns should be fitted with brackets for large flowing banners that would advertise the Arts District.

Comment: The applicant was provided with the suggestion regarding columns, but disregarded it. The banners, however, have been provided. Please see Finding 12 for a further discussion of the applicant's architectural choices.

5. Second floor art studio windows are too plain. They should have shutters or something designating a use different from storage or commercial.

Comment: The applicant has chosen to disregard this suggestion. Use of shutters at this scale might have looked inappropriate and the different use in the first two stories is designated by the use of a different color CMU.

6. The building should be balanced on the north facing Rhode Island Avenue with a structure similar to the structure on the south.

Comment: This would be an off-site consideration. Detailed site plans are limited to the boundaries of the site.

Additionally, they stated: "The controlling concept is a building within the designated Arts District. The applicant has the use. Certainly this location meets the corporate business plan; however, conformity to the Arts District is essential to create the expected long lasting fit of the building with the future development of the Arts District. This building must complement the future Prince George's County African American Cultural Center at North Brentwood. The town was previously approached by EZ Storage to partner in the Cultural Center Project with the current proposed building design. It did not meet the town's expectations of a companion building. EZ Storage should be sensitive to the future of the Arts District and produce an improved model. This is a foundation building in the Arts District and the development tone must be established

now to ensure long-term success. Furthermore, the proposed building will be a companion to the Cultural Center and the Town of North Brentwood expects a structure that will complement a major attraction for the citizens of Prince George's County and tourists. Artistic treatment is a must for the EZ Storage building.

The Town of North Brentwood's comments have been incorporated into the recommended conditions below as appropriate.

q. **Town of Edmonston**—In an email dated August 8, 2006, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Edmonston indicated that they would have no comment on the Brentwood EZ storage facility.

r. **Town of Brentwood**—In a letter dated August 22, 2006, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Brentwood offered the following:

There is strong interest by the Mayor and Council that every effort be made to ensure that the retail and arts elements proposed in the plans succeed and not be pushed out by storage use. With that in mind, the Mayor and Council voted to support the project contingent upon EZ Storage meeting the following conditions:

1. That the amount of retail and artists' studio space be maximized on the first two floors—the most that zoning and other county codes will allow.

Comment: Inclusion of retail and artists' studio space was hampered by parking requirements. The applicant has built some flexibility into his plans by architecturally distinguishing the first two stories of the building. If recommended condition 3 is made a part of the subject approval, should market forces dictate and/or additional parking be made available, more space could be made available for retail and artists' studio space by staff level review of the project.

2. That one row of parallel parking be installed along Rhode Island Avenue. That will greatly aid the retail users of the facility.

Comment: Applicant is willing to dedicate right-of-way along Rhode Island Avenue for the purposes of installing such parking, but is hesitant to undertake responsibility for installing it, as required SHA approval processes might delay construction of the project.

3. That the retail and artist studio space be managed and marketed successfully, in a manner that will ensure its long-term success.

Comment: Applicant has expressed a commitment to the above and through his work with the Gateway Arts District CDC has committed to offering long-term leases to artists and appropriate retail uses.

4. That signage be kept to a minimum.

Comment: The project involves only wall signage and the amount of that signage would be limited by recommended condition 1k below.

5. That the exterior surface material be made from a material that is the same as or compatible with the nearby structures.

Comment: The chosen material is compatible in color with the brick of the nearby post office. Please see Finding 12 for a further discussion of the applicant's architectural choices.

6. That the retail and artist uses be made visually distinct from the storage uses.

Comment: The retail and artist uses will be limited to the first two stories of the proposed building that have been made visually distinct from the storage uses by utilization of a ground-faced (polished) light-colored CMU. In contrast, the upper stories are specified as textured red CMU.

7. That recruitment of retail and art businesses be done in coordination with the Town of Brentwood and the Gateway CDC.

Comment: Such coordination has occurred and will continue to take place.

The Town of Brentwood's comments are included as appropriate in the recommendation below.

- s. **City of Hyattsville**—In letter dated August 28, 2006, the mayor of the City of Hyattsville, noting that they supported the mix of uses with the inclusion of the retail and artist spaces, and supported the Gateway CDC's parking plan, stated that they were concerned at the use of Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) and the potentially large "EZ Storage" signage on the building.

Comment: The applicant is largely utilizing a combination of textured and polished CMU for the building, and the signage is limited by a recommended condition below. EIFS is limited to the top cornice of the building and a band between the building's 1st and 2nd stories to provide signage for retail/artists' units.

- t. **Town of Mount Rainier**—On August 9, a representative of the Town of Mount Rainier verbally informed staff that they would have no comment on the subject project.

12. 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.
13. Staff, in an attempt to convince the applicant of its desirability as an architectural material, has discussed, at length, the possibility of using brick instead of concrete block for the project with the applicant. The applicant has rejected this notion out of hand, offering information regarding the cost effectiveness and structural superiority of concrete block for the construction of the project.

More particularly, in an email dated September 6, 2006, Craig B. Pittinger to Steven Adams and Ruth Grover, the applicant stated:

What makes an entirely masonry structure cost effective for self storage, art studios and small retail suites is the masonry architectural unit is not just structural but it is also the architectural exterior skin. In other words, you are requesting we surround an entirely masonry building

(architectural masonry units) with a masonry building (brick). You are asking us to build the exterior masonry structure twice.

To switch to a steel building with brick veneer would require a complete structural redesign. In addition, this is not an effective way to handle the 125-pound warehouse structural live loads required and at the same time deal with the column spacing necessary for the first floor retail and art studio space. A typical self storage building built with a steel structure has a 5 by 10 or 10 by 10 column spacing to handle the loads.

(Office has 50-pound structural live loads and residential 40-pound structural live loads.) Your request would be reasonable for these types of buildings and uses.”

In a later email, dated September 7, 2006, Craig B. Pittinger to Steven Adams and Ruth Grover, the applicant expounded as follows:

“...we looked at several variations including making the entire building red. During our collaborative meetings, Grant Architecture and Garth Rockcastle (Dean of the University of Maryland Architecture School) has stressed the correct appearance would be setting the retail and art studios along Rhode Island Avenue apart from the self storage by color and texture. We started with one floor with canopies and it just did not look right. We incorporated the second floor with a larger section of glass which everyone agreed worked. In addition, the additional glass would be a benefit should there be art studios on the second floor in the future, based on favorable market conditions and if additional parking facilities were made available. What we currently have designed is what the experts have agreed is the most effective balance of color and materials using architectural principles.

The ground-faced (polished) units at the base give the building a traditional architectural appearance. Using split-faced units on the upper floors will give a textured (3 dimensional look) and avoiding a monolithic or painted cinder block appearance. Using ground-faced (polished) units on the upper floors, whether you are near or far, will appear smooth, one will not notice the ground-faced (polished) appearance, and again may be mistaken for painted cinder block appearance.

We have found the public response from the use of red and beige colors is “What an attractive “brick” building you have constructed” even though it is a split-faced architectural masonry unit. The public will be viewing the building (especially the upper floors) from a distance, and when near will get the benefit of the ground-faced (polished) units for that granite or sandstone appearance on the first floor.”

Staff has reluctantly conceded the point to the applicant, while retaining the opinion that use of all brick would have resulted in a superior final product.

14. Section 27-548.25 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies the requirements for site plan approval in a development district overlay zone. Below staff has included each requirement of the section of the zoning ordinance in bold face type, followed by staff comment.

A Detailed Site Plan must be approved for the development in accordance with Part 3, Division 9 thereof.

Comment: If the Planning Board approved the subject detailed site plan, the applicant will have complied with this requirement.

In approving the Detailed Site Plan, the Planning Board shall find that the site plan meets applicable Development District Standards.

Comment: Applicant has met the preponderance of applicable development standards as outlined in Finding 8 of this report. Variations from the development standards have been enumerated in Finding 9 and staff is recommending approval of those variations as adequately justified.

If the applicant so requests, the Planning Board may apply development standards which differ from the approved Development District Standards, unless the Sectional Map Amendment provides otherwise. The Planning Board shall find that the alternate Development District Standards will benefit the development and the Development District will not substantially impair implementation of the Master Plan, Master Plan Amendment, or Sector Plan.

Comment: Finding 8 of this report discusses in detail the deviations from the development standards of the Approved Sector Plan for the Gateway Arts District. Staff would suggest that the Planning Board would be able to find that the alternate development district standards established by the subject project will benefit the development district and will not substantially impair implementation of the Master Plan, Master Plan Amendment, or Sector Plan.

Special Exception procedures shall not apply to uses within a Development District. Uses which would normally require a Special Exception in the underlying zone shall be permitted uses if the Development District standards so provide, subject to site plan review by the Planning Board. Development District Standards may restrict or prohibit any such uses. The Planning Board shall find in its approval of the site plan that the use complies with all applicable Development District Standards, meets the general special Exception standards in Section 27-317 (a)(1), (4), (5), and (6), and conforms to the recommendations in the Master Plan, Master Plan Amendment, or Sector Plan.

Comment: No such Special Exception use is involved in the subject project.

If a use would normally require a variance or departure, separate application shall not be required, but the Planning Board shall find in its approval of the site plan that the variance or departure conforms to all applicable Development District Standards.

Comment: The four deviations enumerated in Finding 8 are the only variations involved in the subject project.

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-06024 and Special Permit SP-060002 EZ Storage Brentwood subject to the following conditions and variations from development standards regarding building and streetscape siting, access, and circulation unit design, signage, and parking and loading as more particularly described in Finding 9:

1. Prior to signature approval of the plans, the applicant shall revise the plans as follows or submit the required additional documentation:

- a. Access to 41st Street and the driveway leading from Utah Avenue access shall be widened 30 feet per DPW&T standards.
 - b. Access to the first loading bay from Utah Street shall be redesigned so as not to be impeded by the proposed raised concrete island. Toward that end, such concrete island shall be shortened and its horizontal portion eliminated. Final design shall be approved by the Transportation Planning Section.
 - c. The access driveway to the main parking and loading areas shall be redesigned to the satisfaction of the Transportation Planning Section as designee of the Planning Board.
 - d. Bearings, distances, and acreage reflecting those on the final plat shall be indicated on the plans.
 - e. The title block shall be updated to include the legal description of the lot (lot, block and subdivision name).
 - f. The adjacent streets shall be dimensioned from the centerline.
 - g. The height of the building and number of stories shall be included on the plans.
 - h. The plan shall include the dimensions of typical parking spaces, driveway aisles, and access to the lot.
 - i. The site plan shall demonstrate that the building will be handicap accessible. A curb cut or depressed curb shall be provided on all plans.
 - j. The applicant shall submit a copy of the stormwater management plan for the project.
 - k. The secondary identification signs that indicate that the project is “self-storage” and “climate-controlled” shall be removed from the relevant elevations.
 - l. The following note shall be placed on the DSP: “Green building techniques such as the use of recycled building materials or building materials from sustainable resources shall be incorporated.”
2. Prior to issuance of the first building permit for the project:
 - a. The applicant, and the applicant’s heirs, successors, and/or assigns shall provide for the installation of one “Share the Road with a Bike” sign in accordance with State requirements and subject to the approval of the State Highway Administration. If so approved, a note will be placed on the final record plat stating that installation will take place prior to the issuance of the first building permit.
 - b. The applicant shall submit a copy of the letter of exemption that was issued regarding the projects exemption from the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance.
 3. Should market forces dictate and/or additional parking become available to the project, the mix of storage versus retail and/or artist studio space may be adjusted by application to the Planning Board or its designee.