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Special Permit

Major Departure

Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center – Phase 2

SP-230001

MJD-2024-003

REQUEST	STAFF RECOMMENDATION
<p>SP: Revision to SP-150004 to replace two single-family detached dwellings with nine single family attached dwellings and one HOA parcel.</p> <p>MJD: Major Departures from four design standards in the Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) Development Plan</p>	<p>With the conditions recommended herein:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of Special Permit SP-230001• Approval of Major Departure MJD-2024-003

Location: On the south side of Towne Park Road, approximately 100 feet east of its intersection with Evansgreen Drive.

Gross Acreage: 0.40

Zone: LMUTC

Zone Prior: M-U-T-C/D-D-O

Reviewed per prior Zoning Ordinance: Section 27-1704(j)

Gross Floor Area: N/A

Lots: 9

Parcels: 1

Planning Area: 75A

Council District: 07

Municipality: N/A

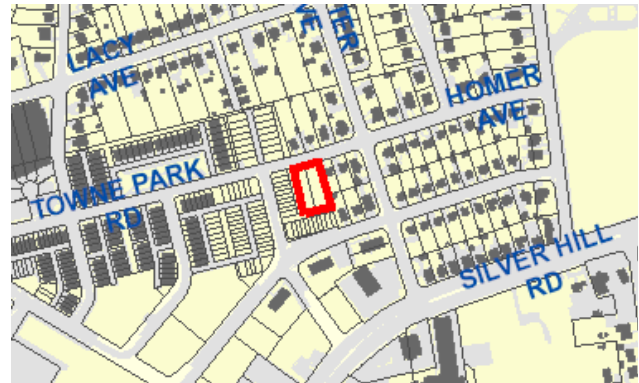
Applicant/Address:

Redevelopment Authority of Prince George's County
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Staff Reviewer: Dominique Lockhart

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Planning Board Date:	06/20/2024
Planning Board Action Limit:	N/A
Staff Report Date:	06/06/2024
Date Accepted:	04/05/2024
Informational Mailing:	11/29/2023
Acceptance Mailing:	04/02/2024
Sign Posting Deadline:	05/21/2024

The Planning Board encourages all interested persons to request to become a person of record for this application. Requests to become a person of record may be made online at

http://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/Person_of_Record/.

Please call 301 952 3530 for additional information.

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THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Special Permit SP-230001
Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center – Phase 2

The Zoning staff has reviewed the subject application and presents the following evaluation and findings leading to a recommendation of APPROVAL, with conditions, as described in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The subject property is within the Legacy Mixed-Use Town Center (LMUTC) Zone. It was previously located within the Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) Zone, and the 2014 *Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* Development District Overlay Zone. The site is also subject to the 2006 *Approved Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan* (Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan). Pursuant to Section 27-1704(j) of the Zoning Ordinance, “[p]roperty in the LUTC Zone may proceed to develop in accordance with the guidelines and standards of the specific Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan in which the property is located. Except as modified by Section 27-4205(e) of this Ordinance, the procedures of the Zoning Ordinance in existence prior to the effective date of this Ordinance, including procedures relating to variance approvals and secondary amendments, shall also apply to property in the LUTC Zone as appropriate.” Accordingly, staff considered the following in reviewing this special permit application:

- a. The requirements of the prior Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance for Special Permits;
- b. The requirements of the 2006 *Approved Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan* (Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan)
- c. The requirements of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPS) 4-20039 and ADQ-2022-008;
- 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; and

- h. Community feedback.

BACKGROUND

1. **Request:** This Special Permit (SP) application seeks to amend SP-150004 to replace two single-family detached dwellings with nine single-family attached dwellings and one HOA Parcel, with associated major departures from four design standards in the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan.
2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	EVALUATED
Zone(s)	LMUTC (prior M-U TC/D-D-O)	M-U-TC/D-D-O
Use(s)	Vacant	Single-Family Attached Dwellings
Gross Tract Acreage	0.40	0.40
Lots	2	9
Parcels	0	1
Dwelling Units	0	9

Other Development Data

Parking Requirements per the 2006 *Approved Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan* (Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan)

Pursuant to Section 27-548.23(c) of the prior Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance, the location, size, height, design, lot coverage of structures, parking and loading, signs, open space, and other regulations may be specified in the text, concept plans, and maps in the development district standards. The 2006 *Approved Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan* (Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan) contains parking standards that are applicable to the development. The applicant has provided a parking tabulation displaying the required and proposed parking for the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development, as approved with Special Permit SP-150004. Per the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan, the minimum parking requirement is 1,150 parking spaces, and the maximum parking allowed is 1,935 parking spaces. The number of parking spaces being provided is 1,514 parking spaces, which meets the parking standards. For the subject development, all nine townhomes proposed will consist of rear loaded single-family-attached units with tandem two-car garages. The garages will be accessed from existing alleyways.

3. **Location:** The subject property is located on the south side of Towne Park Road, approximately 10 feet east of its intersection with Evansgreen Drive, and is located within Planning Area 75A and Council District 07. Specifically, the property is known as Lots 20 and 21, recorded in the Prince George's County Land Records in Plat Book SJH 250, page 44 on July 28, 2017, and titled "Phase 2C, Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center".
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The properties to the north, beyond Towne Park Road, consist of single-family detached dwellings within the Residential, Single-Family-65 (RSF-65) Zone

(formerly the One-Family Detached Residential (R-55) Zone), and single-family attached dwellings within the LMUTC Zone (formerly the M-U-TC Zone). The properties abutting the subject site to the east consist of single-family detached dwellings within the RSF-65 Zone. The properties to the south and west, beyond the private alleys, consist of single-family attached dwellings (townhouses) within the LMUTC Zone and are a part of the Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development, as previously approved with SP-150004.

5. **Previous Approvals:** Special Permit SP-150004 was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Board on November 19, 2015 (PGCPB Resolution No. 15-123). This special permit approved a mixed-use development and amendments to the development standards of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan, for the 25.16-acre site known as Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center. The development consisted of approximately 80,331 square feet of commercial retail space, 563 multifamily residential dwellings, 137 senior apartments, 219 townhomes, two single-family detached homes, a 45,000-square-foot performing arts center, a 33,000-square-foot public plaza (with a seasonal ice-skating pavilion), and a 36,000-square-foot neighborhood park.

SP-150004-01 was approved by the Prince George's County Planning Director on March 30, 2018, for a revision to the townhouse architectural elevations.

Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPS) 4-15005, which was a companion case to SP-150004, was approved by the Planning Board on December 1, 2015 (PGCPB Resolution No. 15-124). PPS 4-15005 was approved for 29 parcels and 221 lots for the development of multifamily dwelling units, single-family attached dwelling units, single-family detached dwelling units, commercial use, and institutional use.

PPS 4-20039 was approved on December 1, 2022 (PGCPB Resolution No. 2022-123) for one parcel and 9 lots for single-family attached development. The boundaries of PPS 4-20039 were previously associated with two single-family detached lots, as approved with PPS 4-15005 and SP-150004 for the larger Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center project. PPS 4-20039 supersedes PPS 4-15005 on Lots 20 and 21.

6. **Design Features:** The applicant proposes to construct nine single-family attached dwellings and one HOA parcel, to replace the two single-family detached dwellings approved with SP-150004. The HOA parcel will contain landscaping and a 5-foot-wide sidewalk, providing a pedestrian connection from the front of the townhouses to Towne Park Road. The design intent of the subject development is to have all lots connecting to a common open space system. This open space is designed to create an attractive shared environment, through the shared walkway, and a variety of landscaping elements such as trees and shrubs.

To access the site, vehicles will enter through the existing private alley network that was approved via PPS 4-15005 and SP-150004. The nine townhouses will then be incorporated into the overall Town Square at Suitland Federal Center community Homeowner's Association, with access to the existing private recreational facilities. The applicant previously recorded a Recreational Facilities Agreement (RFA) for Suitland Town Center, recorded in the Prince George's County Land Records in Liber 40608 folio 476 on February 23, 2018, as a means of addressing the mandatory parkland dedication requirement. The RFA covered all residential development approved with PPS 4-15005, including Lots 20 and 21, which are now proposed to be developed with townhouses. The

recreational facilities in the RFA, specific to the single-family development area, included 14,454 square feet of passive urban play areas and 35,081 square feet of open play areas. The existing obligation for the development of recreational facilities is sufficient to cover the nine additional dwelling units proposed with the subject SP. The recreational facilities under the existing RFA already have full financial assurances and are currently being developed in accordance with site details approved with SP-150004.

Even though the nine proposed townhomes have frontage on private alleys that do not require sidewalks, sidewalks will be provided on-site to link the nine dwellings to Towne Park Road to the north. The sidewalk connection on Towne Park Road will then link the proposed lots to the existing Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center site to the west and the surrounding neighborhood to the east. In addition, a painted crosswalk at the crossing between Private Alley M and Towne Park Road will be provided.

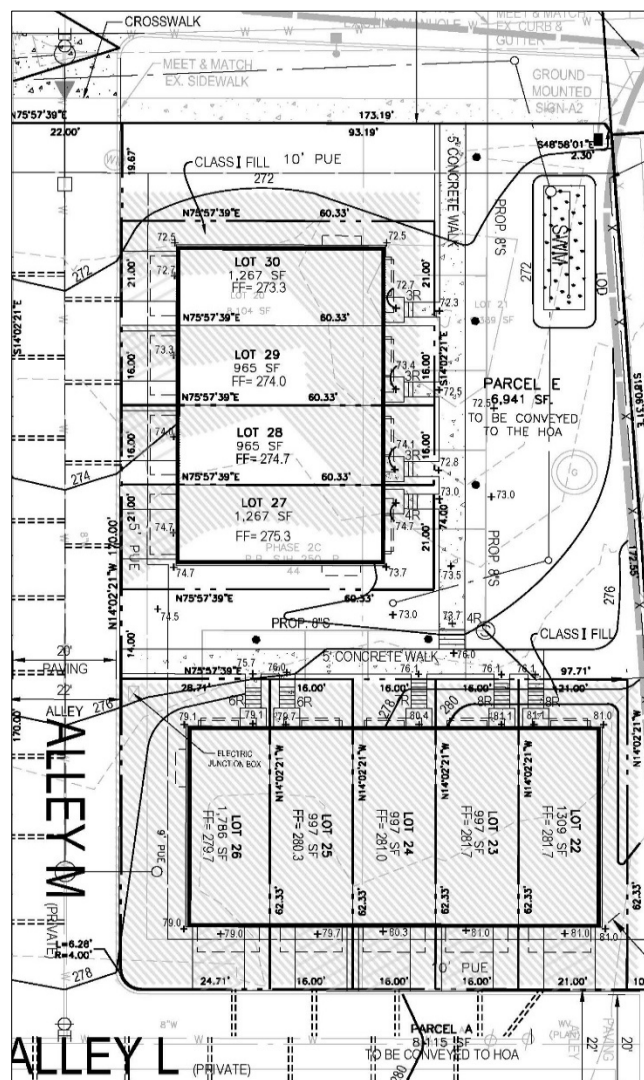


Figure 1: Site Plan

Architecture

The architecture of the nine townhouse buildings is consistent with those approved by the Planning Board in SP-150004 (PGCPB Resolution No. 15-123). All nine townhouses are four stories in height and will contain substantial brick/masonry building treatments. Architectural elevations were included in the subject application submittal that provided a brick/masonry percentage table that shows 100 percent of the front façades will be composed of brick. Additional design features of the townhouses include fourth-floor terraces, rear balconies over the two-car garages, box bay windows, and metal awnings over the entrance doorways. The incorporation of terraces gives emphasis to the building roofline, and clearly defines each floor vertically, to create depth and shadow to the building.



Figure 2: Front Elevation



Figure 3: Side Elevation



Figure 4: Rear Elevation

Signage

The applicant has provided the sign package that was approved for the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development. One ground mounted sign is proposed for this development. Per the approved sign design standards, the ground mounted sign will be double-sided with illumination, and the sign area will not exceed 200 square feet.

SIGN CATEGORY OVERVIEW

PROJECT IDENTITY SIGNS: GROUND MOUNTED - A2

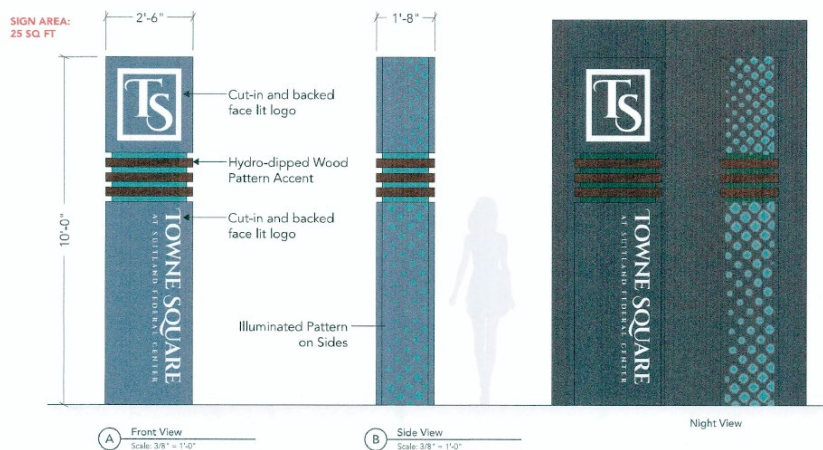


Figure 5: Ground Mounted Sign

Lighting

The SP proposes integrating pedestrian lighting throughout the development along the internal sidewalk pathways. Street lighting is also provided along Towne Park Road.

In addition, the architectural elevations show building-mounted lighting. On the front elevations light fixtures are shown over the entrance doorways, and on the rear elevations light fixtures are shown above the balconies to ensure appropriate lighting for the purposes of security and safety.

COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **2006 Approved Suitland Mixed Use Town Center Development Plan (Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan):**

The Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan recommends residential land uses on the subject property (page 17). The application is in the residential district, also known as the neighborhood street development area. The application, to construct nine townhouses, conforms to the designated land use of the development plan. Furthermore, the plan identifies four design themes with specific goals, as follows:

- Character goal: To create a unique image for Suitland that will help forge a sense of community and induce civic pride (page 18).
- Diversity goal: To build a diversified Suitland town center that is full of choice and variety to meet different needs of the community so as to maintain a vibrant atmosphere and generate an exciting environment (page 18).
- Accessibility goal: To maximize accessibility to the Suitland town center by providing good access to a multimodal transportation system and to create a permeable and legible Suitland town center that is easy to get to and move through (page 19).
- Public Realm goal: To build a high-quality public realm network that is functional, attractive, comfortable, and safe that can provide a memorable and enjoyable experience in the town center (page 19).

The proposed nine townhouses will be a continuation of the residential neighborhood that was constructed in previous phases of the Towne Center's development. The architecture of the new units will mirror the existing townhouses that share the service alley. The landscape proposed for this phase will be a continuation of plantings and the stormwater management (SWM) facilities that are common throughout the larger town center development. As stated in the applicant's SOJ, the goal of this development and the larger Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center is to create a sense of community, enhance the housing diversity of the neighborhood, and provide connections that enhance pedestrian accessibility.

The application is subject to the design standards of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan, which have been evaluated by staff. The applicant has requested departures from four of the design standards contained in the plan, which have also been evaluated for conformance to the required findings. Section 27-4205(e)(5)(C) states that departures from the development plan should be processed as major departures.

The applicant has requested a major departure to the Building Placement Standard on page 33 of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan that states "[b]uildings shall be oriented to and front the street. Each building shall have a minimum of one direct pedestrian path to the street." Section 27-3614(f) of the Zoning Ordinance contains the following required findings for approval of a major departure:

(f) Departure (Minor and Major) Decision Standards

The Planning Director or Planning Board, as appropriate, may approve a departure (minor or major) upon a finding that the applicant demonstrates the proposed departure complies with the following:

- (1) The departure falls within the thresholds provided in Subsection 27-3614(b)(2), Major Departures, above, for the applicable type of departure;**
- (2) The departure is consistent with the character of development on surrounding land, and is compatible with surrounding land uses;**
- (3) The departure:**
 - (A) Compensates for some unusual aspect of the site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners in general, and**
 - (B) Supports an objective or goal from the purpose and intent statements of the zone where it is located, or**
 - (C) Saves healthy existing trees.**
- (4) The departure will not pose a danger to the public health or safety;**
- (5) Any adverse impacts are mitigated, to the maximum extent practicable;**
- (6) The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that result in a reduction in each development standard by the maximum allowed over the previous twenty (20) years. (Relevant development standards cannot be reduced beyond the maximum thresholds allowed in this Subsection, through more than one departure, over the previous twenty (20) years); and**
- (7) For a departure from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual, the Planning Board shall find, in addition to the requirements above, that there is no feasible proposal for alternative compliance, as defined in the Landscape Manual, which would exhibit equally effective design characteristics.**

This departure is allowed per Table 27-3614(b)(2): Major Departures of the zoning ordinance. A departure is required to have townhouse Lots 27-30 front an inner courtyard rather than Towne Park Road. The courtyard will be landscaped with trees, shrubs, a bioretention swale, and a fence along the property line. The subject site is situated within the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development. As stated in the applicant's SOJ, the proposed layout and architecture of the townhouses is designed to blend into the rest of the development, which was approved in SP-150004. Having the townhouses face an inner courtyard, rather than the street, will still provide future residents with access to Towne Park Road. The

courtyard will contain a 5-foot-wide sidewalk that leads to the main public roadway. As conditioned, the requested departure will not pose a danger to public health or safety.

Comments were provided to the applicant following the Subdivision Development Review Committee meeting, held on April 05, 2024. One comment provided stated that the location of the subject development is unique as it is across from, and adjacent to single-family detached residences. To better interact with the public realm on Towne Park Road and maintain a transition area to the nearby single-family residences, staff requested the architecture for Lot 30 be redesigned to have the side elevation mimic a front façade. This could be accomplished by incorporating a front door, portico, front porch/stoop, and/or other architectural elements that typically characterize the front of homes. In addition, staff conducted a site visit with the applicant's team on May 08, 2024.

The applicant provided a response in their SOJ stating that the additional architectural features are not necessary for this development. The applicant notes that the nine additional lots in this Special Permit, SP-230001, will be incorporated into the existing Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center project and its 220 residential units to date. The applicant acknowledges Towne Park Road as an entrance to the existing community, but in analyzing the surrounding homes within the Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center site, has found several instances where side elevations of the single-family attached dwelling units face public streets at the boundaries of the development. These include Lot 1, Block A, which faces the existing public elementary school, and Lot 55, Block D, along Towne Park Road, located adjacent to the site of interest being developed.

The applicant further explains that relocating the doorway for Lot 30 to face Towne Park Road is not possible for this development site as a suggested method to conform with this standard. The proposed front door location is along the shared party wall with the adjoining unit, along with the staircase. If the applicant were to shift the location of the door, and thus the stairwell, to the outside corner wall facing Towne Park Road, there would be zero windows along this façade. This limitation is due to the architectural elevations not being designed to have windows along the stair wall.

After further review, staff agree that window fenestration would present a better façade to the public realm than a single door and no windows. To mitigate any adverse impacts from the townhouses not facing the public realm, staff have conditioned revisions to the side façade of the end unit, Lot 30, to create a more front façade appearance. One of the goals for residential districts within the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan is to incorporate a variety of architectural styles, which this revision would accomplish by maximizing the number of windows facing Towne Park Road.

The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that reduce the development standard beyond the maximum threshold allowed.

The departure is not from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual.

Staff support the departure to allow the applicant to construct townhouses fronting away from the street, as conditioned herein.

The applicant has requested a second major departure to the Form and Massing Standard on page 35 of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan that states, “[b]uildings should be a minimum of two stories and a maximum of three stories in height, not including active living space in a dormered attic.” Section 27-3614(f) of the Zoning Ordinance contains the following required findings for approval of a major departure:

(f) Departure (Minor and Major) Decision Standards

The Planning Director or Planning Board, as appropriate, may approve a departure (minor or major) upon a finding that the applicant demonstrates the proposed departure complies with the following:

- (1) The departure falls within the thresholds provided in Subsection 27-3614(b)(2), Major Departures, above, for the applicable type of departure;**
- (2) The departure is consistent with the character of development on surrounding land, and is compatible with surrounding land uses;**
- (3) The departure:**
 - (A) Compensates for some unusual aspect of the site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners in general, and**
 - (B) Supports an objective or goal from the purpose and intent statements of the zone where it is located, or**
 - (C) Saves healthy existing trees.**
- (4) The departure will not pose a danger to the public health or safety;**
- (5) Any adverse impacts are mitigated, to the maximum extent practicable;**
- (6) The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that result in a reduction in each development standard by the maximum allowed over the previous twenty (20) years. (Relevant development standards cannot be reduced beyond the maximum thresholds allowed in this Subsection, through more than one departure, over the previous twenty (20) years); and**
- (7) For a departure from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual, the Planning Board shall find, in addition to the requirements above, that there is no feasible proposal for alternative compliance, as defined in the Landscape Manual, which would exhibit equally effective design characteristics.**

This departure is allowed per Table 27-3614(b)(2): Major Departures of the zoning ordinance. The design standard requires a maximum of three stories in height. The nine townhouses are proposed to be four stories in height, which is compatible to the townhouses previously approved within the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development. The additional story is to allow for rooftop terraces. A terrace is one of the architectural features mentioned in the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan that stimulates social interactions and optimizes the potential for indoor/outdoor living. The terraces on each townhouse dwelling unit will be oriented toward the inner courtyard.

The requested departure will not pose a danger to public health or safety as the additional one-story will not directly impact the public realm. In addition, the design will be compatible with the other townhouses located throughout the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development, making the rooftop terrace a guaranteed architectural feature for potential residents.

The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that reduce the development standard beyond the maximum threshold allowed.

The departure is not from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual.

Staff support the requested departure.

The applicant has requested a third major departure to the Facade Standard on page 35 of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan that states “[s]ingle family (detached/attached) residential buildings should have masonry facades (brick, stone or approved equal) on at least 100 percent of three sides, including the front (excluding gables, windows, trim, and doors).” Section 27-3614(f) of the Zoning Ordinance contains the following required findings for approval of a major departure:

(f) Departure (Minor and Major) Decision Standards

The Planning Director or Planning Board, as appropriate, may approve a departure (minor or major) upon a finding that the applicant demonstrates the proposed departure complies with the following:

- (1) The departure falls within the thresholds provided in Subsection 27-3614(b)(2), Major Departures, above, for the applicable type of departure;**
- (2) The departure is consistent with the character of development on surrounding land, and is compatible with surrounding land uses;**
- (3) The departure:**
 - (A) Compensates for some unusual aspect of the site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners in general, and**

- (B) Supports an objective or goal from the purpose and intent statements of the zone where it is located, or**
- (C) Saves healthy existing trees.**
- (4) The departure will not pose a danger to the public health or safety;**
- (5) Any adverse impacts are mitigated, to the maximum extent practicable;**
- (6) The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that result in a reduction in each development standard by the maximum allowed over the previous twenty (20) years. (Relevant development standards cannot be reduced beyond the maximum thresholds allowed in this Subsection, through more than one departure, over the previous twenty (20) years); and**
- (7) For a departure from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual, the Planning Board shall find, in addition to the requirements above, that there is no feasible proposal for alternative compliance, as defined in the Landscape Manual, which would exhibit equally effective design characteristics.**

This departure is allowed per Table 27-3614(b)(2): Major Departures of the zoning ordinance. Architectural elevations were submitted by the applicant that show there will be brick/masonry façades on 100 percent of two sides, including the front and side elevations. The rear elevation is composed of vinyl siding. The rear of the townhouses will be oriented toward a private alley, and do not directly face the public realm. The adjacent properties to the south and west of the site, beyond the private alleys, consist of townhouses that are a part of the Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development, as previously approved with SP-150004. These townhouses, located across the private alley, have the same architectural design as the townhouses proposed with this SP application. The front and side elevations of the townhouses will face the public street, Towne Park Road, and an inner courtyard.

The requested departure will not pose a danger to public health or safety as the façade design will be compatible with the other townhouses located throughout the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development, making the overall neighborhood cohesive.

The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that reduce the development standard beyond the maximum threshold allowed.

The departure is not from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual.

Staff support the requested departure.

The applicant has requested a fourth major departure to the Sidewalk Standard on page 36 of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan that states “[a] continuous sidewalk system shall be provided on both sides of the streets. Sidewalks shall be between six and eight feet in

width, shall be buffered from vehicular traffic by a minimum six-foot- wide landscape strip, and shall be paved with bricks, concrete pavers, or high-quality concrete accented with brick. Concrete with a broom finish may also be an acceptable finish if approved by the Design Review Committee.” Section 27-3614(f) of the Zoning Ordinance contains the following required findings for approval of a major departure:

(f) Departure (Minor and Major) Decision Standards

The Planning Director or Planning Board, as appropriate, may approve a departure (minor or major) upon a finding that the applicant demonstrates the proposed departure complies with the following:

- (1) The departure falls within the thresholds provided in Subsection 27-3614(b)(2), Major Departures, above, for the applicable type of departure;**
- (2) The departure is consistent with the character of development on surrounding land, and is compatible with surrounding land uses;**
- (3) The departure:**
 - (A) Compensates for some unusual aspect of the site or the proposed development that is not shared by landowners in general, and**
 - (B) Supports an objective or goal from the purpose and intent statements of the zone where it is located, or**
 - (C) Saves healthy existing trees.**
- (4) The departure will not pose a danger to the public health or safety;**
- (5) Any adverse impacts are mitigated, to the maximum extent practicable;**
- (6) The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that result in a reduction in each development standard by the maximum allowed over the previous twenty (20) years. (Relevant development standards cannot be reduced beyond the maximum thresholds allowed in this Subsection, through more than one departure, over the previous twenty (20) years); and**
- (7) For a departure from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual, the Planning Board shall find, in addition to the requirements above, that there is no feasible proposal for alternative compliance, as defined in the Landscape Manual, which would exhibit equally effective design characteristics.**

This departure is allowed per Table 27-3614(b)(2): Major Departures of the zoning ordinance. A 5-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed along the street frontage. The applicant states in their SOJ that the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal

Center development includes sidewalks that vary from four to five feet with five-foot-wide landscape strips, and that the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) control the width of the sidewalks within the public rights-of-way. For the subject application, all on-site sidewalks proposed will be five feet wide, which is consistent with the overall Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center development. The requested departure will not pose a danger to public health or safety as the proposed sidewalk system provides connectivity to the larger neighborhood. The sidewalk system will connect each townhouse dwelling unit to the street.

A landscape buffer exhibit was submitted, which shows enhanced planting along the eastern property line, between the fronts of the proposed townhouses and side and rear yards of the adjacent, existing, single-family detached dwellings. The buffer consists of 80 plant units per 100 linear feet, and includes a mix of shade and evergreen trees, and shrubs.

The site is not subject to a series of multiple, incremental departures that reduce the development standard beyond the maximum threshold allowed.

The departure is not from a standard contained in the Landscape Manual.

Staff support the requested departure.

Compliance was demonstrated through the submitted SP application, that all additional applicable Suitland M-U-TC development standards including landscaping, buffering, screening, SWM, lighting, circulation, parking, and signage requirements were met.

8. Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance: The SP application has been reviewed for compliance with the applicable requirements of the prior Zoning Ordinance:

- a. Section 27-239.02(a)(6)(B) of the prior Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board must make the following findings in order to approve a special permit, as follows:

(B) The Planning Board may grant a special permit in the M-U-TC Zone if it finds that the site plan is in conformance with the approved Town Center Development Plan and its guidelines and any specific criteria for the particular use. In the event a special permit is approved by the Planning Board, the approval is conditional upon the issuance of a building or use and occupancy permit by the Department of Environmental Resources (DER), Permits and Review Division."

The application is subject to the design standards of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan which have been evaluated by staff. The applicant has requested departures from four of the design standards contained in the plan, which have also been evaluated in Finding 7 above by staff for conformance to the required findings. The four departures include allowing Lots 27-30 to not front a street, allow the maximum height to be four stories, allow 100 percent brick on two façades, and allow 5-foot-wide sidewalks. Staff are in support of the departures as requested.

9. **Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-20039:** PPS 4-20039 was approved by the Planning Board on December 1, 2022 (PGCPB Resolution No. 2022-123), subject to eight conditions. The conditions relevant to the review of this special permit are listed below in **bold** text. Staff analysis of the project's conformance to the conditions follows each one, in plain text:

2. **Development of the site shall be in conformance with Stormwater Management Concept Plan 21525-2015-04, and any subsequent revisions.**

Copies of the approved SWM Concept Plan 21525-2015-04 and approval letter were submitted with this special permit application. The application, SWM concept plan, and associated letter were approved on January 1, 2024, and expire January 1, 2027. A condition has been included herein requiring the applicant to revise the SWM plan to match the proposed layout. The approved SWM plan only shows eight townhouse lots, where nine lots are proposed. The applicant has confirmed that no additional SWM features will be needed to accommodate the additional lot. DPIE had no objection to the subject application.

3. **Prior to approval, the final plat of subdivision shall include the dedication of 10-foot-wide public utility easements along the abutting public rights-of-way, as delineated on the approved preliminary plan of subdivision.**

The special permit plan shows the 10-foot-wide public utility easement (PUE) along the abutting public rights-of-way in conformance with the approved PPS.

5. **Prior to approval of building permits, the applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall demonstrate that the common areas approved on this preliminary plan of subdivision have been conveyed to the homeowner's association.**

6. **Prior to approval of building permits, the applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall convey to the homeowner's association land as identified on the approved preliminary plan of subdivision. Land to be conveyed shall be subject to the following:**

- a. **A copy of the recorded deed for the property to be conveyed shall be submitted to the Subdivision Section of the Development Review Division.**
- b. **All waste matter of any kind shall be removed from the property, and all disturbed areas shall have a full stand of grass or other vegetation upon completion of any phase, section, or the entire project.**
- c. **The conveyed land shall not suffer the disposition of construction materials or soil filling, other than the placement of fill material associated with permitted grading operations that are consistent with the permit and minimum soil class requirements, discarded plant materials, refuse, or similar waste matter.**

- d. **Any disturbance of land to be conveyed to the association shall be in accordance with an approved site plan and tree conservation plan. This shall include, but not be limited to, the location of sediment control measures, tree removal, temporary or permanent stormwater management facilities, utility placement, and stormdrain outfalls.**
- e. **Stormdrain outfalls shall be designed to avoid adverse impacts on land to be conveyed to the association. The location and design of drainage outfalls that adversely impact property to be conveyed shall be reviewed and approved by the Development Review Division.**
- f. **The Prince George's County Planning Board, or its designee, shall be satisfied that there are adequate provisions to ensure retention and future maintenance of the property to be conveyed.**

Common area, Parcel E, as shown on the PPS as to be conveyed to the homeowners association (HOA), is also shown as to be conveyed to the HOA on the SP plan. The applicant must demonstrate conformance to Conditions 5 and 6, with respect to Parcel E, at the time of building permit application.

- 7. **The applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall construct the following facilities and show these facilities on a pedestrian and bikeway facilities plan, as part of the site plan:**
 - a. **Minimum 5-foot-wide sidewalk along the frontage of Towne Park Road, as consistent with the developed site, including Americans with Disabilities Act curb ramps and associated crosswalks.**
 - b. **Provide the pedestrian and bicycle facilities and amenities where applicable, as described in the 2006 *Approved Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*.**

The applicant has updated the SP plan to include a 5-foot-wide sidewalk along Towne Park Road and a striped crosswalk at the intersection of Alley M and Towne Park Road.

- 8. **In accordance with Section 24-135(b) of the prior Prince George's County Subdivision Regulations, the applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall provide adequate on-site recreational facilities in accordance with the recreational facilities agreement (RFA) recorded in Liber 40608 at folio 476. The recording reference of the RFA shall be noted on the final plat prior to its approval.**

The recreational facilities under the existing RFA already have full financial assurances and are currently being developed in accordance with site details approved with SP-150004.

10. **Certificate of Adequacy ADQ-2022-008:** ADQ-2022-008 was approved by the Planning Director on November 15, 2022. This ADQ was approved with one condition, and it is applicable to this special permit, as shown below in **bold** text, with staff analysis of the project's conformance following, in plain text:

1. **Total development shall be limited to uses which generate no more than 8 AM peak-hour trips and 8 PM peak-hour vehicle trips. Any development generating an impact greater than that identified herein shall require a new determination of the adequacy of transportation facilities and a new Preliminary Plan of Subdivision.**

The current application is for nine single-family attached dwellings and is within the established trip-cap.

11. **2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** Per page 23 of the Suitland M-U-TC Development Plan, the standards within the M-U-TC Development Plan replace the comparable standards in the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual).
12. **Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance:** This site is exempt from the 2010 Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO) because this site is less than one acre in size and contains no woodland or regulated environmental features. A tree conservation plan will not be required for conformance with the WCO, and the applicant has submitted a standard letter of exemption.
13. **Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** Subtitle 25, Division 3, the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, requires a minimum percentage of the site to be covered by tree canopy for any development projects that propose more than 5,000 square feet or greater of gross floor area or disturbance, and require a grading permit. The subject site is zoned M-U-TC and is required to provide a minimum of 10 percent of the gross tract area to be covered by tree canopy. A tree canopy coverage schedule was provided that demonstrates the 10 percent requirement is met.
14. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized, as follows, and incorporated herein by reference:
- a. **Historic Preservation and Archeological Review**—In a memorandum dated May 8, 2024 (Stabler, Smith, and Chisholm to Lockhart), the Historic Preservation Section noted a search of current and historic photographs, topographic and historic maps, and locations of currently known archeological sites indicates that the probability of archeological sites within the subject property is low. A Phase I archeology survey will not be recommended. The subject property does not contain, and is not adjacent to, any Prince George's County historic sites or resources. This proposal will not impact any Prince George's County historic sites, historic resources, or known archeological sites.
- b. **Community Planning**—In a memorandum dated May 20, 2024 (Hartsfield to Lockhart), the Community Planning Division found that, pursuant to Section 27-239.02(a)(6)(B) of the prior zoning ordinance, approval of the subject SP

application (and the departures requested) will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan. Additional analysis is contained in Finding 7 above.

- c. **Transportation Planning**—In a memorandum dated May 21, 2024 (Patrick to Lockhart), the Transportation Planning Section offered an analysis of the prior approvals, which is incorporated into Findings 9 and 10 above.

This application is subject to the 2009 *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* (MPOT). The subject site does not have frontage along any master plan roadways but has frontage along Towne Park Road, which is designated on the preliminary plan of subdivision (PPS) as a public right-of-way. The subject property does not front any master-planned pedestrian or bicycle facility.

The site is also subject to the 2006 *Approved Suitland Mix-Use Town Center Development Plan* which includes design guidelines (pages 30–49). As conditioned in PPS 4-20039, sidewalks are shown along the site’s frontage of Towne Park Road. A 5-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed for direct access to the proposed units and provides the necessary pedestrian circulation. Vehicular access is provided via private alleys and is consistent with the previously approved plans.

The site plan proposes two vehicular access points, to the single-family-attached dwellings, via private alleyways from Towne Park Road and Evansgreen Drive. The site has been designed in conformance with the applicable master plans and no modifications are proposed to the roadway network.

- d. **Subdivision**—In a memorandum dated May 21, 2024 (Bartlett to Lockhart), the Subdivision Section provided an analysis of the preliminary plan’s prior approvals, as included in Finding 9 above. The subdivision staff also noted that the existing Lots 20 and 21 were created with the approval of PPS 4-15005 as single-family detached lots. The intent of these lots was to create a transition from the dense townhouse development to the west and the single-family detached dwellings to the east. This was discussed at the time of PPS approval for 4-20039, which resubdivided Lots 20 and 21 into nine lots and a single parcel for the development of nine townhomes, instead of the two single-family homes originally approved under PPS 4-15005. In an effort to maintain an adequate transition, with nine townhomes instead of two single-family homes, buffering techniques were proposed by the applicant to meet the initial purpose of the previously approved PPS 4-15005.

- e. **Environmental Planning**—In a memorandum dated May 20, 2024 (Kirchhof to Lockhart), the Environmental Planning Section offered the following:

Environmental Review

A Woodland Conservation Ordinance Letter of Exemption S-019-2024 which was approved on February 12, 2024, and is valid until February 12, 2026; and a Natural Resources Inventory Plan (NRI-082-2022), were submitted with this application. Based upon the provided information and PGAtlas, there are no regulated environmental features or unsafe soils on-site. The application has an approved

stormwater management concept plan and associated letter 21525-2015-04, which was approved January 1, 2024, and expires January 1, 2027.

- f. **Permit Review Section**—In a memorandum dated May 02, 2024 (Meneely to Lockhart), the Permit Review Section had no comments for the SP application.
 - g. **Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)**—In an email dated May 21, 2024 (Thompson to Lockhart), DPR indicated that the recreational facilities under the existing RFA already have full financial assurances and are currently being developed in accordance with site details approved with SP-150004.
 - h. **Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE)**—In a memorandum dated May 23, 2024 (Guzman to Lockhart), DPIE offered comments regarding frontage improvements, storm drain systems, and site access. DPIE has no objection to the subject application.
 - i. **Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department**—In a memorandum dated April 08, 2024 (Reilly to Lockhart), the Fire/EMS Department noted that they do not have any comments regarding the subject application.
 - j. **Prince George's County Health Department**—In a memorandum dated May 16, 2024 (Adepoju to Lockhart), the Health Department offered a health impact assessment of the proposed development, and comments addressing potential impact activities, such as noise and dust, extending into adjacent properties during construction.
 - k. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**—At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, WSSC had no comments on the subject SP.
15. **Community Feedback**—At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, the Prince George's County Planning Department has not received any written correspondence from the community on this subject application.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Zoning staff recommend that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Special Permit SP-230001, and Major Departure, MJD-2024-003, which includes four departures from the 2006 *Approved Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*, for Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center – Phase 2, subject to the following condition:”

- 1. Prior to certification of the special permit, the applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall provide the following:
 - a. Revise the side/north elevation of the unit closest to Towne Park Road, Lot 30, to include additional design features such as a two-story bay window, a minimum of two windows on the ground floor, and a minimum of five windows facing Towne Park Road, or other such features as agreed upon by the applicant and approved by

the Zoning Section of the Development Review Division, as designee of the Prince George's County Planning Board.

- b. Revise Stormwater Management (SWM) Concept Plan 21525-2015-04 to match the proposed layout to include nine townhouse lots.