4900 Fairmont

Silver Spring, Maryland

Staff Report for the review of

Project Plan 920070030
Utilizing the Optional Method of Development

4900 Fairmont

Fairmont Development, LLC
Architects Collaborative
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VIKA, Engineer
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Linowes and Blocher, LLP, Atorney

Prepared for The Montgomery County Planning Board May 10, 2007

MEMORANDUM

DATE:

April 25, 2007

TO:

Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA:

Rose Krasnow, Chief 744

Robert Kronenberg, Acting Supervisor

Development Review Division

FROM:

Kristin B. Aleshire, Project Manager

Christopher Blount, Project Reviewer

ARRO Consulting, Inc.

PROJECT NAME: CASE NUMBER:

4900 Fairmont 920070030

REVIEW TYPE:

Project Plan Review

ZONE:

CBD-2

APPLYING FOR:

Approval of a maximum of 154,864 gross square feet of new

development, including a maximum of 118 market rate residential units; of which 15% are MPDUs; and approximately 5,500 square feet of first

floor retail on 25,586 gross square feet

LOCATION:

Lot 657, Woodmont

Property is located on the southwestern corner of the intersection of Norfolk and Fairmont avenues, in the Woodmont Triangle area of

Bethesda

MASTER PLAN:

Bethesda CBD 1994, Woodmont Triangle Amendment 2006

REVIEW BASIS:

Div. 59-D-2 of Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance

APPLICANT:

Fairmont Development, LLC

FILING DATE:

August 9, 2006

HEARING DATE:

May 10, 2007

Attached is the staff report for the proposed 4900 Fairmont Project Plan. The Planning Board public hearing for this application is scheduled for May 10, 2007. The Staff recommends approval with conditions as delineated in the staff report.

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SUMMARY

Proposal

The Applicant proposes to redevelop the property with a 16-story condominium building comprised of 149,364 square feet of residential building area and approximately 5,500 square feet of ground floor retail. The residential component will contain up to 118 dwelling units, 15% of which will be MPDUs. Approximately 168 parking spaces for the residential units, and perhaps for some of the retail, will be provided in a four-story below-grade garage structure, with parking for the balance of the non-residential uses to be provided through the public parking available in the Bethesda Parking Lot District.

Public Use Space and Amenities

Approximately 4,190 square feet, or 20% of the net lot area, is to be used as on-site public use space. Amenities, such as a pedestrian plaza, landscaping, public art, seating, and special lighting are proposed within this area to accommodate public activities and to enhance the streetscape in the Woodmont Triangle area. The development will also provide off-site amenities including streetscape improvements equivalent to 37 percent of the net lot area along the east side of Fairmont Avenue and a portion of the north side of Norfolk Avenue.

Issues

Primary issues addressed during review include quantity and quality of public use space, amenity areas on and off-site, priority location of streetscape improvements, vehicular access to the garage, pedestrian access to the adjacent public parking garage, rear access for adjoining properties, and stepping back the building. The issue of transfer of FAR and public use space requirements from transfer properties was resolved with the applicant choosing not to proceed with use of density transfers from other properties.

Community Outreach

The Applicant worked closely with the planning staff during the Woodmont Triangle Sector process upon contracting to purchase the ground in December of 2005. Numerous design concepts were presented to staff and the community during the pendency of the plan to ensure that the proposed plan was in keeping with the intent of the sector plan. The applicant continued its efforts to submit a project plan consistent with the adopted Sector Plan while the rezoning of the property was being approved (it was changed from CBD-1 to CBD-2), and immediately thereafter the project plan, as it is now proposed prior to approval of the sector plan amendment, was officially submitted. The applicant also held a public meeting on July 10, 2006 to gather community input relative to the plan.

Public Art Review

The applicant has not provided as part of the Project Plan a definitive type, location, etc. for the public art component. The applicant requested in the revised submission flexibility to refine the public art through the Site Plan review process.

Concurrent Review

There are no other plans submitted concurrent with this review.

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR PROJECT PLAN: Approval of a maximum of 154,864 gross square feet of development, including a maximum of 118 multi-family residential units, of which 15 percent will be MPDUs, and approximately 5,500 square feet of retail space, on approximately 1.63 acres, with the following conditions:

1. Development Ceiling

The proposed development shall be limited to a maximum of 154,864 gross square feet of development, including a maximum of 118 residential units and approximately 5,500 square feet of retail space.

2. Building Height Mass

The height of the building shall not exceed the maximum of 174 feet, as measured from an identified point along Norfolk Avenue that is equal to 351 feet above sea level.

3. Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)

- a. The Applicant shall provide 18 MPDUs, which represents 15 percent of the total number of residential dwelling units, consistent with the requirements of Chapter 25A. The development is receiving a 22% density bonus for providing additional MPDUs on the site.
- b. The Applicant shall distribute the proposed MPDUs in accordance with Chapter 25A and DHCA review.
- c. The Applicant shall meet with the Alternate Review Committee (ARC) to verify that the development meets the criteria for a density bonus, given the provision of additional MPDUs on site.

4. Transportation Improvements

- a. The Applicant shall comply with the recommendations of the M-NCPPC Transportation Planning memo dated April 25, 2007, including future dedication along Fairmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue, a traffic mitigation agreement and pedestrian circulation.
- b. At the time of Preliminary Plan, the Applicant shall obtain the necessary approvals from the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation.
- c. At the time of Preliminary Plan, the Applicant shall dedicate the necessary right-of-way along Fairmont and Norfolk Avenues.
- d. Prior to release of the building permit, the Applicant shall enter into a Traffic Mitigation Agreement with the Planning Board and Montgomery Department of Public Works and Transportation to participate in the Bethesda Transportation Management Organization.

5. Public Use Space

- a. The proposed development shall provide a minimum of 20% (4,190 square feet) of on-site public use space, including the area in front of the building along Fairmont and Norfolk Avenues and the plaza area at the intersection of both streets.
- b. The proposed development shall provide a minimum of 37% (7,630 square feet) of off-site amenities, including the streetscape improvements along the frontage of the property on Fairmont and Norfolk avenues, along the north side of Norfolk Avenue from Veteran's Park to the eastern boundary of Pt. of Lot 602 and improvements to Veteran's Park.
- c. The proposed public use space shall be easily and readily accessible to the general public and used for public enjoyment.

6. Site Design

a. The applicant shall provide safe and adequate access in the rear of the subject property, presently providing egress from Garage 11 and the adjacent properties fronting Woodmont Avenue.

7. Streetscape

- a. The applicant shall provide the full streetscape improvements along Norfolk and Fairmont Avenues, along the frontage of the subject property, in accordance with the Bethesda Streetscape Plan (1992) as amended. The improvements include providing utilities underground.
- b. Off-site streetscape improvements shall be provided along Fairmont Avenue, south of the subject site, and improvements to the north side of Norfolk Avenue from Veteran's Park to the eastern boundary of Pt. of Lot 602.

8. Public Art

A public art component shall be incorporated into the development to include opportunities within the public use space that will reinforce both the architecture of the building and the gateway feature of the Woodmont Triangle, providing a place for pedestrians and shoppers to congregate.

9. Staging of Amenity Features

- a. The project shall be developed in one phase.
- b. Landscaping to be installed no later than the next growing season after completion of the proposed building and public plaza.
- c. Development of the on-site amenities shall occur concurrently with the occupancy of the residential units and retail space, and all on-site and off-site improvements will be completed concurrently with the occupancy of the units. A detailed

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development program will be developed at site plan to establish the timing and completion of the site features and amenities.

10. Maintenance and Management Organizations

Initially, the applicant, and subsequently, within ninety days of formation, the Condominium Association shall become a member of and enter into an agreement with the Bethesda Urban Partnership for the purpose of maintaining public open spaces and participating in community events.

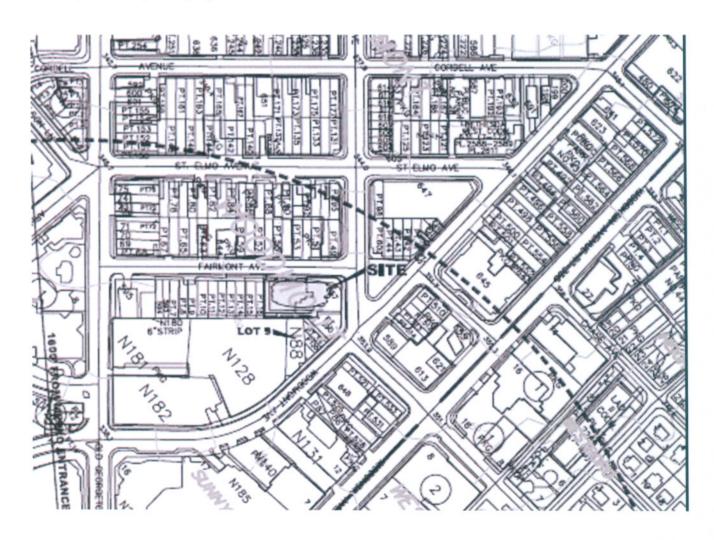
11. Coordination for Additional Approvals Required with Site Plan

- a. The applicant shall present the public art components to the Art Review Panel for review and comment that will be available to the Planning Board prior to scheduling the Planning Board hearing for the site plan application.
- b. The applicant shall enter into a maintenance agreement for the applicable streetscape improvements.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION Surrounding Area

The property is located in the southwestern corner of Norfolk Avenue and Fairmont Avenue, within the Woodmont Triangle section of the Bethesda CBD. It is an existing lot of record, known as Lot 657, Woodmont, recorded among the Land Records at Plat Number 22153. The property has a gross tract area of 25,586 square feet. The net lot area of property is 20,584 square feet after deduction of dedicated rights-of-way. The property abuts a public parking deck to the west and several 2 and 3 story retail centers to the south, all having access on Woodmont Avenue.

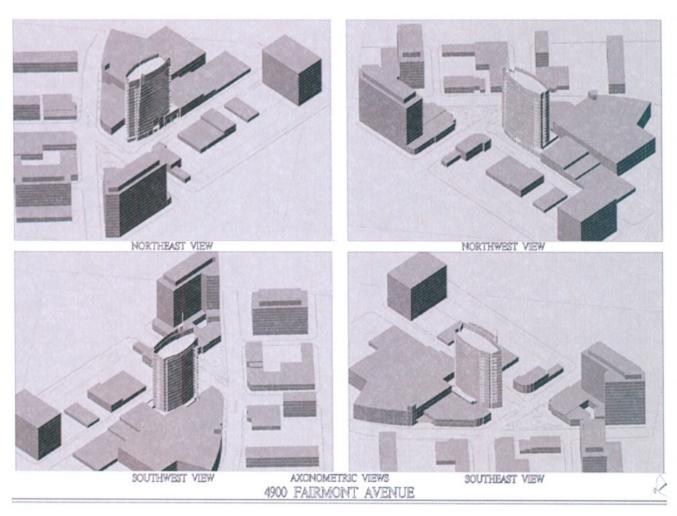
Fairmont Avenue is a local two-way street extending between Norfolk Avenue and Old Georgetown Road. The intersection of Norfolk Avenue, Fairmont Avenue, and Woodmont Avenue forms a gateway into the Woodmont Triangle with an urban park directly across Norfolk Avenue from this property to the east. Across the street, on the north side of Fairmont Avenue, are several one and two story commercial structures that are proposed to be replaced by a similar 17-story redevelopment project.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION Site Description

The site is located at 4900 Fairmont Avenue in the Bethesda Central Business District and is zoned CBD-2. The site contains one parcel of property, which is presently used for commercial retail uses. There is access to the rear of the property, which is utilized by the property owner and adjacent property owners for trash removal and other ancillary uses to the businesses. It also provides limited public access to the public parking deck to the west of this property.

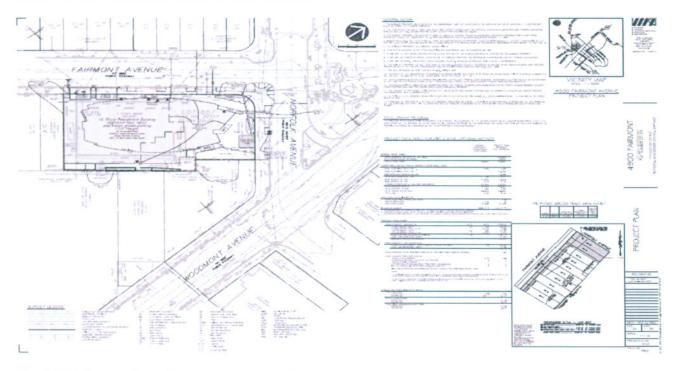
The property is nearly level with the commercial uses fronting primarily on Fairmont Avenue. There is limited landscaping on the property and no identifiable consistency in the existing streetscape. The access to the rear of the property, along the west side, facing Fairmont Avenue, is currently wide enough for vehicular access, but will be removed as part of the development proposal. This access is currently used on both the south and west side of the property for pedestrian access to the public parking garage. The axonometric views shown below highlight the proposed 16-story building as it relates to the massing of the surrounding existing buildings.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION Proposed Development

The Applicant proposes to redevelop the property with a 16-story condominium building comprised of 154,864 square feet of residential building area including approximately 5,500 square feet of ground floor retail. The Applicant has suggested that the retail space might increase to 6,000 square feet during the detailed site plan phase. The increase in retail space would only offset the amount of residential. The residential component will contain up to 118 dwelling units, 15% of which will be MPDUs. Approximately 168 parking spaces for the residential units, and some of the retail, will be provided in a four-story below-grade parking structure, with parking for the balance of the non-residential uses to be provided through the public parking available in the Bethesda Parking District.

With regard to building floor layout, the ground floor is designed so the retail space fronts Norfolk Avenue and the residential entrance fronts Fairmont Avenue. Sidewalks along both street fronts will be 15-feet-wide and improved with the Bethesda Streetscape Standard – brick pavers, deciduous shade trees, benches and street lights. The residential lobby, enclosed loading dock and garage ramp will face Fairmont Avenue, consistent with the existing orientation of access to the Property from Fairmont Avenue.



To fulfill the on-site public use space requirement for the optional method, a roughly 30' by 60' public plaza facing Norfolk and Fairmont avenues will be located along the eastern retail access to the building. The plaza will serve to compliment existing Veteran's Park as the gateway into Woodmont Triangle. The public use space also allows continued use of the pedestrian access to the public parking garage and the rear of adjacent retail uses on a limited basis. This will avoid the need for the adjacent retail properties to be serviced from Woodmont Avenue. A portion of

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the plaza will accommodate outdoor seating if a restaurant tenant leases the retail space. This is not included in the public use space. Public art and landscaping associated with the project will be located in the plaza and along the streetscape to animate the public use space. The applicant has requested flexibility through this process for public art planning and review by the Art Review Panel. The primary location of the public art component was considered in a previous submission and will be integrated into the plaza area. A sculptural installation is being considered in consultation with the development team to integrate with the design of the architecture and the use and location of the site. Suggested materials will be permanent and require limited maintenance, likely either 316 series stainless steel or marine grade aluminum, coated as appropriate and consistent with the overall design. The use of other materials, including polycarbonates, is also possible depending on the final concept. The form of the building, resembling the shape of a vessel, prompts a lyrical treatment of flowing, repetitive elements employing the vocabulary of the site and enhancing the experience of the structure.

Site requirements and design will determine the number and scale of sculptural elements and level of lighting design. The Artist contemplates an innovative, yet subtle, lighting application within her installation to animate the theme of the site at night, provide a link with the adjacent Veterans Park, extend both the vehicular and pedestrian experience at the Woodmont, Norfolk, and Fairmont Avenue intersections, and to mark a destination within Bethesda. The lighting will likely be a series of LED fixtures seamlessly incorporated in the design of sculptural components and supported by a self-sustaining computer generated program. The overall art concept and design will serve to embrace the space both day and night, integrate within the plaza landscape, and thematically connect with the transparency of the architecture.

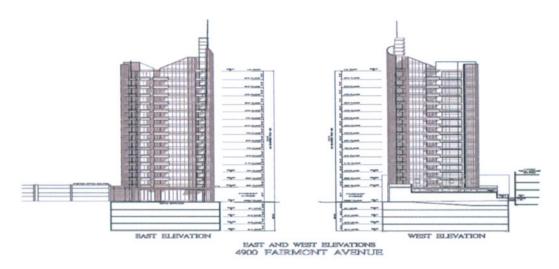
Building Design



The building will consist of 154,864 gross square feet of building area, including 5,500 square feet of ground floor retail. The applicant plans to construct to a building height of 174 feet, utilizing the 22% height bonus allowed in the Sector Plan to accommodate the provision of 15% on-site MPDUs. Approximately 168 parking spaces for the residential units and retail space will be provided in a below-grade, four-story garage structure. The building will have frontage on both Norfolk and Fairmont Avenues, with the main residential entrance along Fairmont Avenue and access to the retail areas from both streets.

The project will improve the streetscape on-site on Fairmont and Norfolk avenues, as well as off-site improvements along both streets within MNCPPC April 26, 2007 Page 11 of 32

the vicinity of the project. These improvements will include pavers, public art, plantings, seating, and other amenities to create an inviting environment for pedestrian use. There will be a limited access pedestrian linkage along the rear of the property, which will lead to and from the adjacent public parking structure and provide continued use for adjacent businesses to access Norfolk Avenue. The building steps back on the southern boundary from the adjacent commercial building.



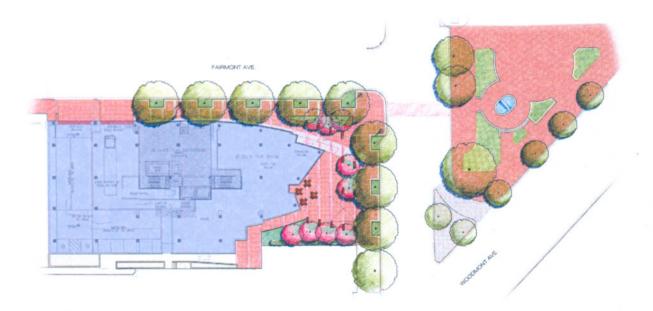
Public Use Space and Amenities

The applicant is providing a total of 11,820 (4,190 on-site) square feet or 57% of on and off-site public use space. The total public use space provided is based on the net lot area of the site. The on-site public use space consists of a public plaza as well as some limited areas along Fairmont Avenue where the width of the sidewalk will be increased and improvements will be made to the streetscape. Amenities within this space include: public art, landscaping, lighting, seating, decorative pavers, retail façade, and receptacles consistent with the Bethesda Streetscape Plan. This plaza will provide a variety of seating opportunities and create a "palate for all seasonal changes", with flexibility to create its own urban space or serve as an expansion for activities in Veteran's Park.

Off-site improvements include streetscape improvements along Fairmont and Norfolk avenues for the entire frontage of both streets. These improvements are to improve the appearance and pedestrian environment and tie into the gateway features of Veteran's Park. Off-site improvements consist of pavers, streetlights and street trees in conformance with the Bethesda Streetscape Plan. The total off-site improvements equate to 7,630 square feet, or 37% of the net lot area. The number is misleading to the extent that the applicant will be required to make certain improvements to Veteran's Park and the intersection of Fairmont and Norfolk Avenues for utilities, which will only increase the total amount of off-site improvements.



The illustrative drawing above indicates the on-site public use space in orange and the off-site public use space and amenity area in blue proposed by the applicant.



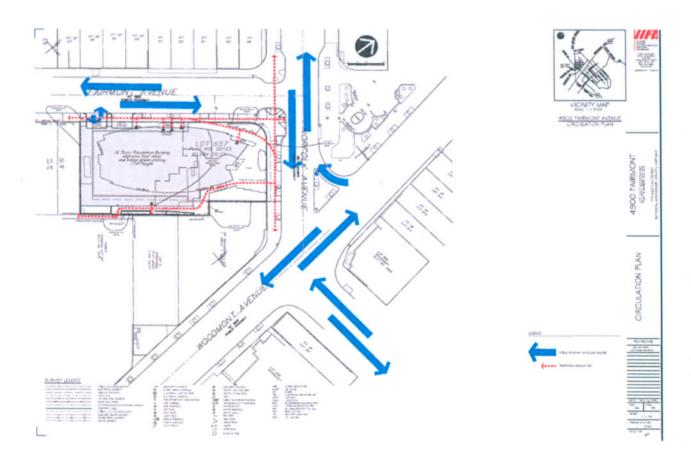
4900 fairmont ave.

PARKERRODRIGUEZ, INC.
Planning
Urban Design

Pedestrian and Vehicular Access

Although the proposed four-level, below-grade parking garage does not meet all of the parking needs for the project, much of the retail parking needs may be accommodated through the use of public parking areas in the Bethesda District, such as the adjoining public parking garage, with direct rear pedestrian access to the property. The Plan shows parking garage access and service access in separate entrances along the western portion of the Fairmont Avenue frontage. This access allows for ingress and egress with connectivity to Norfolk Avenue to other major thoroughfares within the District.

The sidewalk and streetscape improvements are designed to improve current pedestrian circulation and provide more convenient access to the Bethesda Metro and bus facilities, as well as to the free Bethesda Circulator route to access the Metro Station and other downtown Bethesda destinations. The pedestrian traffic flow from the public parking area will be encouraged to utilize the street frontage sides versus rear access. The applicant's proposed Traffic Mitigation Agreement will assist with educating tenants and residents about the alternative modes of transportation available and the services of Bethesda Transportation Solutions.

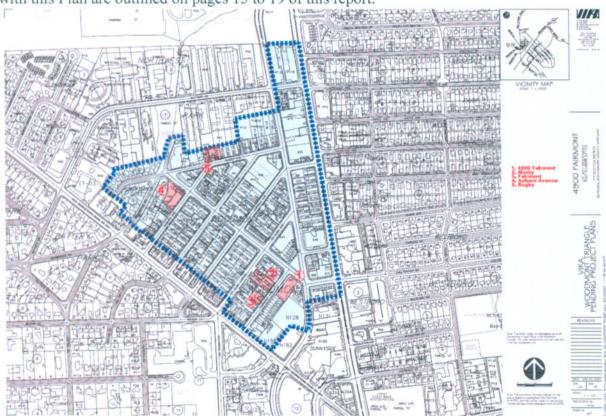


PLANNING AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The site contains 25,586 gross square feet of property identified as Lot 657 Woodmont- 4900 Fairmont Avenue. The property presently consists of one-story commercial structures, most of which are occupied and have access along Fairmont, with service access to the rear. The applicant does not propose to use any transfer of density from other properties in development of this property. It will utilize the maximum amount of allowable FAR at 154,864 square feet, approximately 5,500 of which will be for retail uses, and is requesting as part of Plan approval the flexibility of a 10% adjustment up or down for the ratio of residential to non-residential uses, not to exceed the maximum FAR nor 118 total residential units.

Master Plan

The Project Plan is in conformance with the Woodmont Triangle Sector Plan Amendment (2006) to the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan (1994). A description of the themes and goals for compliance with this Plan are outlined on pages 15 to 19 of this report.



The following graphic is an illustrative of the projects presently under review in the Woodmont Sector Plan area. All of the projects are utilizing the optional method of development. The projects range in size and use. A comprehensive update of the projects' status will be included in each report with an update of the public use space and off-site improvements being implemented with each project.

BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES

Per Section 59-D-2.43, in making its decision on an application for the optional method project plan, the Planning Board must consider:

- (a) The nature of the proposed site and development, including its size and shape, and the proposed size, shape, height, arrangement and design of structures, and its consistency with an urban renewal plan approved under Chapter 56.
- (b) Whether the open spaces, including developed open space, would serve as convenient areas for recreation, relaxation and social activities for the residents and patrons of the development and are planned, designed and situated to function as necessary physical and aesthetic open areas among and between individuals structures and groups of structures, and whether the setbacks, yards and related walkways are located and of sufficient dimensions to provide for adequate light, air, pedestrian circulation and necessary vehicular access.
- (c) Whether the vehicular circulation system, including access and off-street and loading, is designed to provide an efficient, safe and convenient transportation system.
- (d) Whether the pedestrian circulation system is located, designed and of sufficient size to conveniently handle pedestrian traffic efficiently and without congestion; the extent to which the pedestrian circulation system is separated from vehicular roadways so as to be safe, pleasing and efficient for movement of pedestrians; and whether the pedestrian circulation system provides efficient, convenient and adequate linkages among residential areas, open spaces, recreational areas, commercial and employment areas and public facilities.
- (e) The adequacy of landscaping, screening, parking and loading areas, service areas, lighting and signs, in relation to the type of use and neighborhood.
- (f) The adequacy of provisions for construction of moderately priced dwelling units in accordance with Chapter 25A if that Chapter applies.
- (g) The staging program and schedule of development.
- (h) The adequacy of forest conservation measures proposed to meet any requirements under Chapter 22A.
- (i) The adequacy of water resource protection measures proposed to meet any requirements under Chapter 19.

FINDINGS For Project Plan Approval

The following sections of the Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan and the Zoning Ordinance establish findings for compliance, which must be made by the Planning Board. These findings form the basis for the Board's consideration of approval. In accordance herewith, the staff makes the following findings:

Woodmont Triangle Sector Plan Compliance

For the purposes of this report, section headings will be shown in **bold**, verbiage from Plan sections will be shown in *italics*, and comments will be shown in plain text.

1. Compliance with the Woodmont Triangle Sector Plan Goals

a. Housing – Provide opportunities to increase the supply of housing to serve a variety of income levels.

The project will provide up to 118 new residential dwellings units in the CBD, including 15% MPDUs (18) on site. The unit mix presently includes one and two-bedroom units for both the market rate and MPDU units. The unit mix may be further refined during the site plan process.

b. Small-Scale Retail – Provide opportunities to retain existing businesses and expand opportunities for new businesses.

The project incorporates the optional method for mixed-use development to include approximately 5,500 square feet of retail space having frontage on both Norfolk and Fairmont avenues, thus providing opportunities for new businesses to locate in the Woodmont Triangle.

c. Arts and Entertainment District – Enhance the existing public arts programs in the Bethesda CBD and provide opportunities for both the visual and performing arts.

The on-site amenities for the project will contain a public art component intended to draw the general public to the amenity spaces within the project. The Applicant has selected an artist that will work closely with the design team to determine the appropriate type and form of art at this location. The applicant has presented the design of the building and plaza area to the art panel for guidance and feedback on the suggested elements and will be required to go back to the public arts panel prior to site plan.

d. Safe and Attractive Streets – Focus on improving the safety and character of the existing streets. Establish Norfolk Avenue as the main street in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area.

The project establishes Norfolk Avenue as the "main street" in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area, as recommended in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment. Through architecture and appropriate organization of the building, the entrances to the building, the location of retail, access and loading, and the location of amenities, the project is oriented to achieve the "main street" goal for Norfolk Avenue.

e. Public Amenities – Increase the flexibility in providing the public use space through the Optional Method of Development by allowing off-site and on-site fulfillment of this requirement, and by identifying a list of priority public amenities.

In addition to satisfying the on-site public use space requirements for an optional method project through the provision of on-site amenities, the project will provide off-site public amenities intended to provide greater connectivity for other areas in the CBD where sidewalk and streetscape improvements have not been constructed to the standards of the Sector Plan and Bethesda Streetscape Plan. Streetscape improvements are provided on portions of Fairmont and Norfolk Avenue as well as improvements to the adjacent Veteran's Park.

2. Compliance with the Woodmont Triangle Sector Plan General Recommendations

a. Provide a range of housing opportunities, including new low-rise and high-rise housing, to serve a variety of income levels.

The project will help fill the need for high-rise housing opportunities for a range of income levels. Blocks 44 and 45 have been identified in the Sector Plan as the most appropriate location for high-rise housing in the Woodmont Triangle. This proposal incorporates a 174-foot-tall building utilizing a density bonus for additional MPDUs on the site, which would need to be approved by the ARC committee prior to site plan.

b. Public surface parking lots in the Sector Plan area should be considered for optional method housing projects and projects with significant permanent affordable housing, as is being done in other areas such as Lot 31 and in Silver Spring.

This general recommendation is not applicable to the property or the project.

c. Support the "step down" of building heights from the Metro station area to the edges of the Central Business District, but provide incentives for increased building heights to encourage new opportunities for housing for all income levels.

The project provides for an appropriate transition from the Metro Core to the Woodmont Triangle, also creating the precedent intended by the Woodmont Triangle Amendment to provide for greater density in building height at the appropriate locations within the Woodmont Triangle (*i.e.*, Norfolk Avenue and specifically Blocks 44 and 45 as identified in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment), thus allowing for the creation of new housing opportunities.

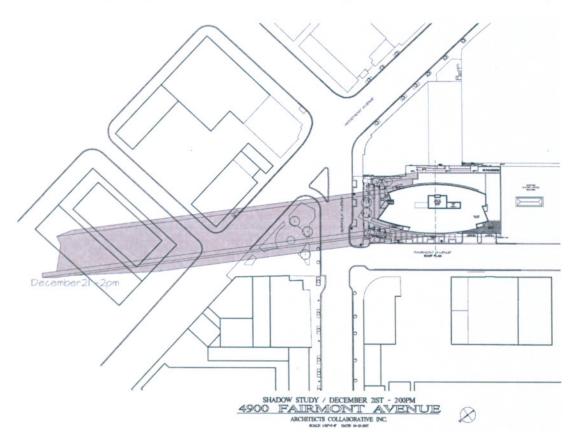
d. Protect the sunlight to the area's main street, Norfolk Avenue, by approving development that steps back from Norfolk Avenue, particularly on the southwest side of the street.

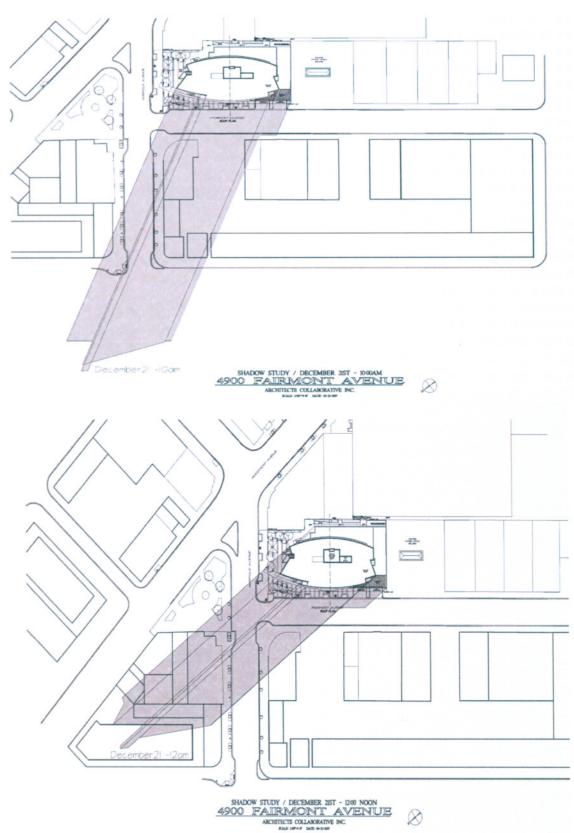
The Applicant has provided shade studies, which will be completed for the project to determine if shadowing from the natural sunlight will create adverse conditions for nearby properties or public spaces. The applicant shall provide copies for review.

3. Compliance with the Woodmont Triangle Sector Plan Urban Design Guidelines

a. Design new buildings so that public streets and spaces retain adequate sunlight, particularly along Norfolk Avenue.

The Applicant provided shade studies indicating the shadowing effect of natural sunlight from the proposed building. The studies indicate the proposed buildings will create the most adverse conditions, in terms of shading, for nearby properties or public spaces on December 21 between 10 am and 2 pm. The applicants' building design intends to minimize the shadowing effect on Veteran's Park and Norfolk Avenue during the optimal times of year where the park and street will be extremely active.





b. Provide sufficient building setbacks to adequately accommodate pedestrians and streetscape improvements. Where outdoor restaurants are proposed, additional building setbacks may be required to accommodate pedestrian space and outdoor seating areas.

The project façade contains building setbacks that allow for an appropriate transition from the street, thus creating a stepping affect. The applicant has indicated that a certain amount of private seating area will be reserved along the street level retail to provide for restaurant seating and other spaces to enhance the experience and the street level activity along the project frontage. The building also steps back from the adjacent commercial properties to the south.

c. Review new projects for compatibility with existing uses and to ensure animation of the first floor space through use of retail, restaurant, or other activating uses.

The project is compatible with existing and planned uses in the area. The proposed first floor restaurant or residential use satisfies this requirement and the addition of high-density residential housing will provide economic opportunities for existing businesses in the vicinity of the project. The orientation of the building has been carefully sited to open up the intersection providing more activity and compatibility with Veterans Park for events and daily use.

d. Provide street-oriented retail, restaurants, and other street animating uses on the first floor of buildings located along streets such as Norfolk Avenue and Cordell Avenue.

The project will include street oriented retail, restaurants and other street animating uses on the first floor along Norfolk Avenue and Fairmont Avenue.

e. Maintain the established building line along Norfolk Avenue.

The project utilizes the corner and adjacent park setting to expand upon the public use space created along Norfolk Avenue at this intersection. This effort reduces the building line of Norfolk Avenue, but is similar in its approach to animate the intersection at the pedestrian level.

4. Compliance with the Woodmont Triangle Sector Plan Public Amenities and Facilities Guidelines

a. Improve Norfolk Avenue as a pedestrian system that connects existing public facilities and amenities such as Battery Lane Urban Park, the Whitney Theater, the Bethesda Outdoor Stage, Imagination Stage, and Veterans Park to the Capital Crescent Trail. Renovation of Norfolk Avenue should include; utilities placed underground; Washington Globe street lights and other festive lighting; benches, bike racks, brackets for banners, and trash receptacles; street trees; outdoor seating for

restaurants and cafes; public art; and special paving for sidewalks established as the standard for Bethesda.

The applicant has indicated that all of the elements listed above will be included within the public use improvements proposed for the site.

b. Provide the Bethesda streetscape on other streets in the study area, such as Cordell Avenue.

The most appropriate off-site amenities that could be provided by this project are to provide sidewalk and streetscape enhancements that link the project to other areas within the Woodmont Triangle.

c. Establish north-south, mid-block pedestrian connections for the blocks located between Old Georgetown Road and Norfolk Avenue.

There are no opportunities for mid-block crossings at the project site, however the proposed off-site improvements will enhance the pedestrian connection from Norfolk Avenue and Fairmont Avenue to Veterans Park and Woodmont Avenue.

d. Establish a network of diverse urban spaces when including public use space on-site.

The on-site amenity space being provided with this project will provide some opportunity for the public to gather in front of the retail businesses facing Norfolk Avenue creating a larger animated space to accompany the adjacent Veterans Park. Through connectivity of these two public places with attractive streetscape improvements, the proposed amenity plaza for this project will be a compatible public improvement for this area.

e. Blocks 44 and 45 are the blocks in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area that are closest to Metro and provide the potential for higher density redevelopment. The existing zoning on these blocks is CBD-1 and CBD-R2. In order to encourage residential redevelopment, the Sectional Map Amendment recommends changing the existing CBD-1 zoning to CBD-2, with an FAR of 5.0 for all properties in these blocks and a height limit of 143 feet or 174 feet with a 22% MPDU bonus.

The property is located within this designated area within the Woodmont Triangle Study Area, and the project does maximize development as recommended in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment by incorporating additional building height up to 174 feet and a 22% MPDU density bonus (with 15% of the total units being on-site MPDU's).

ZONING ORDINANCE COMPLIANCE

For the purposes of this report, section headings will be shown in **bold**, verbiage from ordinance sections will be shown in *italics*, and comments will be shown in plain text.

1. (59-C-6.212) Compliance with CBD-2 Zone Intent

a. To encourage development in accordance with an adopted and approved master or sector plan . . . by permitting an increase in density, height, and intensity where the increase conforms to the master or sector plan . . . and the site plan . . . is approved on review by the Planning Board.

As discussed in more detail in the preceding section of this report, the proposed project is generally consistent with the goals and recommendations established in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment, with respect to increased height, density, retail presence and public use space.

b. To permit a flexible response of development to the market as well as to provide incentives for the development of a variety of land uses and activities in central business districts to meet the needs and requirements of works, shoppers, and residents.

This objective is satisfied, as the proposed mixed-use development, incorporating approximately 5,500 square feet of retail, and will provide a variety of opportunities for workers, shoppers and residents of the CBD.

c. To encourage designs which produce a desirable relationship between the individual buildings in the CBD, between the buildings and the circulation system, and between the CBD and adjacent areas.

The proposed project is on the fringe of the metro core and in an area designated for high-rise residential in the sector plan. While no buildings of the same scale currently exist on the same block, the proposal is consistent with future development goals for the area. In this regard, there is a relationship between the proposed structure and other buildings in the CBD.

d. To promote the effective use of transit facilities in the CBD and pedestrian access thereto.

The proposed pedestrian enhancements will allow for better connection to the transit facilities in the CBD, primarily through better linkage to the Metro Core. The Bethesda 8, a shuttle within the Bethesda CBD, is readily available to residents, visitors and patrons of the project. Garage 11 is also adjacent to the subject property, providing opportunities for off-site parking for residential and retail patrons.

e. To promote improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

The proposed project does not include significant changes to pedestrian or vehicular circulation patterns in the area. The existing pedestrian network will be enhanced with the proposed on-site and off-site streetscape improvements, and will further compliment future improvements associated with projects in the Woodmont area. Additionally, the egress from Garage 11 to the proposed plaza at Norfolk Avenue provides for safe and adequate pedestrian circulation from the current conditions.

f. To assist in the development of adequate residential areas for people with a range of different incomes.

The proposed project does include residential development for a range of income levels. Compliance with this objective could be improved with a better mix of one and two bedroom MPDUs within the residential portion of the development. No three bedroom MPDUs are included in the current proposal.

g. To encourage land assembly and the most desirable use of land in accordance with a sector plan.

The proposed project does not involve land assembly through the purchase of development rights from adjacent properties. Land assembly at this site does not seem to be necessary as there is adequate space on-site to construct the proposed development including parking and amenities. The proposed use is consistent with the Woodmont Triangle Amendment.

2. (59-C-6.213) Compliance with CBD-2 Zone Additional Intent

(b) It the CBD-R1, CBD-R2, CBD-2 and CBD-3 zones, it is further the intent to foster and promote the orderly development of the CBDs of the county so that these areas will enhance the economic status of the county as well as providing an expanding source of employment and living opportunities for its citizens in a desirable urban environment.

The proposed project does satisfy this objective, as it will allow for continued economic development and investment in the Woodmont Triangle and provide economic benefit to the County and its residents.

- (c) In the CBD-2 it is further the purpose:
 - (1) In the CBD-2 Zone, it is further the purpose to provide a density and intensity of development which will permit an appropriate transition from the cores of CBDs to the less dense peripheral areas within and adjacent to the districts.

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The density for the property proposed with the project is appropriate, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of the CBD Zone generally and the Woodmont Triangle Amendment specifically.

(2) In the CBD-2 Zone, it is further the purpose to provide an incentive for the development of residential uses to meet the needs of those employed within the CBDs and those who will be able to use the district transit facilities to travel to and from places of employment.

The proposed project will allow for persons to move to the CBD and to be closer to transit facilities and places of employment. The increase in housing stock will help promote the overall utilization of the Bethesda CBD.

3. (59-C-6.215(b)) Optional Method of Development

Under the optional method greater densities may be permitted and there are fewer specific standards, but certain public facilities and amenities must be provided by the developer. The presence of these facilities and amenities is intended to make possible the creation of an environment capable of supporting the greater densities and intensities of development permitted. If residential uses are included in a development, moderately priced dwelling units must be provided in accordance with Chapter 25A. The maximum dwelling unit density or residential FAR may be increased in proportion to any MPDU density bonus provided on-site.

The applicant has submitted the following justification for the development of the site using the optional method. It is clear that the goals and objectives of the zoning district and Woodmont Triangle Amendment can be best achieved by utilizing the optional method to develop the property. Compliance with public use space and amenity requirements are discussed in later sections of this report.

"In order to achieve the objectives of the Woodmont Triangle Amendment, the property must be developed pursuant to the optional method of development. The standard method of development would only yield a maximum of 3 FAR for a mixed-use development, a density yield far below that appropriate and recommended in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment for the property given its location in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area. As such, the optional method permits a more efficient and desirable development than that which could be accomplished by utilizing the standard method of development (in satisfaction of Section 59-D-2.12(f) of the Zoning Ordinance).

The project, in an overwhelming fashion, provides the appropriate tradeoff of additional density in turn for the supply of greater public spaces and amenities to support the urban environment of the Bethesda CBD. The project will be providing a total approximately of 53% of net lot area in on-site and off-site public use space and

amenities. In addition, through the provision of affordable housing on-site, additional public policies are satisfied through the development of this project."

4. (59-C-6.22) Land Use

The residential uses proposed are all permitted uses in this zone. The non-residential portion of the development will be subject to review of the uses as requested at time of building permit for each of the provided non-residential spaces identified in the project.

5. (59-C-6.23) Development Standards

Following is brief overview of those development standards that apply to this project and how the applicant has proposed to meet them:

PROJECT DATA TABLE FOR CBD-2 ZONE

	Zoning Ordinance Development Standards	Proposed for Approval
Gross Tract Area: Net Site Area (after dedication)	18,000 sf N/A	25,586 sf 20,584 sf
Max. Density: Base Non-Residential Density		
FAR: (SF)	0.21 (5,500)	0.21 (5,500)
Base Residential Density (FAR): (s.f.)	4.79 (122,430)	4.79 (122,430)
Residential Density (FAR): (s.f.) Residential Density Bonus (FAR) (sf.) Total with Density Bonus (FAR):	5.0 (122,930) 1.05 (26,934) 6.05	4.911 (122,930) 1.05 (26,934) 6.05
(22% density bonus for MPDUs		(154,864)
MPDUs (%): (number of units)	15 18	15.25 18
Max. Building Height (ft.):	143-200	174 (as measured From Norfolk Avenue)
Number of Floors	Not specified	16
Min. Building Setbacks (ft.): Front Yard (Norfolk Avenue) Rear yard (southern boundary) Side Yard Fairmont Avenue) Side Yard (eastern boundary)	Not specified Not specified Not specified Not specified	20 0 5 10

	Zoning Ordinance Development Standards	Proposed for Approval
Parking (number of spaces)*: Residential Uses (Mkt. Rate)		
1 BR @ 1.25 sp./unit (64 x 1.25) 2 BR @ 1.50 sp./unit (36 x 1.50)	80 54	
Residential Uses (MPDUs)		
1 BR @ 0.625 sp./unit (11 x 0.625	7 <u>5</u>	
2 BR @ 0.75 sp./unit (7 x 0.75)	<u>5</u>	
Residential subtotal:	146	
15% credit for residential in CBI	1	
Required residential parking	124	
Retail Uses:		
(5,500 gsf @ 5 sp./1000 w/3,300 s		
patron use)	83	
15% credit for CBD/Metro	12 70	
Required retail parking	70	
Total Parking Required	195	168
Public Use Space (% of net lot area):		
On-Site	20% or 4,117 sf	20% or 4,190 sf
Off-Site		37% or 7,630 sf
Total On and Off-Site Public Use Space		57% or 11,820 sf

- The subject property is located in the Bethesda Parking District and the proposed development is not required to provide any off-street parking on site.
 - a. (§59-C-6.234(b)(3)) Floor Area (FAR) Ratio
 The proposed development exceeds the maximum base FAR of 5.0 through the use of a 22% MPDU bonus.
 - b. (§59-C-6.235(b)) Building Height
 The proposed building height of 174 feet exceeds the permitted building height of 143
 feet allowed in the CBD-2 Zone. Footnote 11 to §59-C-6.235(b) states that under the
 optional method of development, the Planning Board may approve height up to 200
 feet if it can be demonstrated that:
 - (1) The additional height is specifically recommended for the property in the applicable sector plan or urban renewal plan or the property is within a revitalization area designated in the applicable sector plan and is located fully or partially within 800 feet of an entrance to a metro station;

This requirement provides that the applicant meet one or both of the conditions presented. The applicant has satisfied the first condition. A maximum building height

of 174 feet is permitted in the Sector Plan with the use of a 22% bonus for the proposed MPDU's.

(2) The additional height is consistent with the criteria and guidelines for the property as contained in the applicable sector plan or an urban renewal plan approved by the County Council under Chapter 56, or in the case of a site outside an urban renewal area, accomplishing the objectives of incorporating residential development with commercial development in a mixed use project in close proximity to a metro station otherwise unobtainable due to site conditions, proximity of adjacent non-residential buildings, or other physical constraints which prevent the achievement of sector plan objectives;

The applicant has satisfied this requirement. A maximum building height of 174 feet is permitted in the Sector Plan with the use of a 22% MPDU bonus for the proposed MPDU's.

(3) The proposed development is compatible with the surrounding development, considering but not limited to the relationship of the building or buildings to the surrounding uses, the need to preserve light and air for the residents of the development and residents of surrounding properties, and any other factors relevant to the height of the building; and

The Applicant provided shade studies indicating the shadowing effect of natural sunlight from the proposed building. The studies indicate the proposed buildings will create the most adverse conditions, in terms of shading, for nearby properties or public spaces in December 21 between 10 am and 2 pm. The applicant has utilized a step back design to maintain the neighborhood scale along Norfolk Ave.

(4) The proposed development will provide additional public facilities and amenities beyond what could otherwise have been provided if the excess height were not approved. Such facilities must be accessible to and usable by the public in accordance with the applicable sector or master plan or urban renewal plan.

The requirements for public facilities and amenities have been exceeded with the proposed plan by providing approximately 57 percent of the net lot area toward on-site public use space and off-site improvements. The proposed plaza will assist in integrating Veterans Park and as a comprehensive public space.

It should be noted for clarity in this report that the above conditions are specifically "cumulative" in nature, which would therefore suggest that all four must be met in order to receive consideration by the Board for a height greater than 143 feet.

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c. (§59-C-6.233) Public Use Space

The requirements for public use space, in terms of quality and quantity have been satisfied as part of the optional method process. Several of the key issues addressed during the review period are as follows:

- (1) The largest portion of the public use space is located along Norfo0lk Avenue and consists of seating for possible specific retail users, planting areas, and streetscape widening.
- (2) There does not appear at this time to be an indication of what public art amenities or where the applicant proposes to place them.
- (3) The public use space along Fairmont serves to widen the off-site sidewalk functions of the frontage along this property, an issue that would probably be completed regardless of the project as proposed.
- (4) Designs for the landscaping, planters, and pavers must be consistent between the architectural plans and landscape plans.
- (5) As noted above, one of the criteria for approving an increase in building height under the optional method for development is that "The proposed development will provide additional public facilities and amenities beyond what could otherwise have been provided if the excess height were not approved. Such facilities must be accessible to and usable by the public in accordance with the applicable sector or master plan or urban renewal plan."
- (6) If the Planning Board requires off-site streetscape improvements to offset the quantity or quality of the public use space that can be provided at the project site, said improvements should be targeted for areas that do not already have pavers, street lights, and street trees. Other areas on Fairmont Avenue between Norfolk Avenue and Old Georgetown Road could be considered for such improvements.

5. (59-D-2.42) Findings Required for Approval

In reviewing the content of the project plan, it is up to the Board to determine that the proposed development has met all of the following requirements, each of which is subject to modification:

a. It would comply with all of the intents and requirements of the zone.

As indicated above, the proposed development does generally satisfy the intents of the CBD-2 zone.

b. It would conform to the applicable sector plan or urban renewal plan.

As indicated in the previous sections, the proposed development is generally consistent with the Woodmont Triangle Amendment, with respect to density, height and public use space.

c. Because of its location, size, intensity, design, operational characteristics and staging, it would be compatible with and not detrimental to existing or potential development in the general neighborhood.

The proposed use of the property is compatible with both existing and proposed development in the neighborhood. The proposed building height is consistent with development goals in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment. Massing of the building has been designed to be sensitive to the adjacent properties.

d. It would not overburden existing public services nor those programmed for availability concurrently with each stage of construction and, if located within a transportation management district designated under chapter 42A, article II, is subject to a traffic mitigation agreement that meets the requirements of that article.

The applicant has included a Transportation Review in the application for the proposed development. The conclusion of the report indicates that that no new improvements to the transportation network are warranted as a result of the proposed development. A draft traffic mitigation agreement has also been included with the application.

e. It would be more efficient and desirable than could be accomplished by the use of the standard method of development.

The applicant has submitted a justification for the development of the site using the optional method. As stated previously, it is clear that the goals and objectives of the zoning district and Woodmont Triangle Amendment can be best achieved by utilizing the optional method to develop the property.

f. It would include moderately priced dwelling units in accordance with Chapter 25A of this Code, if the requirements of that chapter apply.

The project will provide up to 118 new residential dwellings units in the CBD, including 15% MPDUs (18) on site. The unit mix will include a number of different types of bedrooms for both the market rate and MPDUs. The unit mix may be further refined during the site plan process.

- d. Chapter 25A of the Code also requires that the developer enter into a written MPDU agreement approved by the Department of Housing and Community Affairs and the County Attorney. The Applicant is also required to meet with the Alternate Review Committee (ARC) to verify that the development meets the criteria for a density bonus and provide additional MPDUs.
- g. When a project plan includes more than one lot under common ownership, or is a single lot containing two or more CBD zones, and is shown to transfer public open space or development density from one lot to another or transfer densities within a lot with two or more CBD zones, pursuant to the special standards of either section 59-C-6.2351 or 59-C-6.2352 (whichever is applicable), the project plan may be approved by the Planning Board based on the following findings:
 - (1) The project will preserve an historic site, building, structure or area as shown on the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites or the Master Plan for Historic Preservation; and/or

This provision is not applicable to the proposed development.

(2) The project will implement an urban renewal plan adopted pursuant to Chapter 56 of the Montgomery County Code; and/or

This provision is not applicable to the proposed development.

(3) The project will result in an overall land use configuration that is significantly superior to that which could otherwise be achieved.

This provision is not applicable to the proposed development.

h. Any applicable requirements for forest conservation under Chapter 22A.

Due to the size of the Property, the Project will be exempt from forest conservation requirements.

i. Any applicable requirements for water quality resource protection under Chapter 19.

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The applicant has indicated that a conceptual stormwater management plan has been submitted to the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services.

ATTACHMENT A

April 25, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO:

Kriston Aleshire, Planner

Development Review Division

VIA:

Shahriar Etemadi, Supervison

Transportation Planning

FROM:

Ed Axler, Planner/Coordinator

Transportation Planning

SUBJECT:

4900 Fairmont Avenue

Project Plan No. 920070030

Bethesda Central Business District

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) review and approval of the subject project plan application to construct apartments with ground-floor retail uses in downtown Bethesda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the following conditions as part of the APF test for transportation requirements related to the subject project plan:

- 1. The project plan application must limit the subject site's redevelopment to a maximum of 118 high-rise apartments and up to 5,500 square feet of ground-floor retail use.
- 2. At the time of preliminary planning, the applicant must dedicate additional right-of-ways for the following streets:
 - a. Two feet along Fairmont Avenue for a total of 30 feet from the centerline.
 - b. Five feet along Norfolk Avenue for a total of 40 feet from the centerline.
- 3. The applicant must then enter into a Traffic Mitigation Agreement (TMAg) with the Planning Board and the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and

Transportation (DPWT) to participate in the Bethesda Transportation Management Organization. The TMAg shall be executed prior to release of any building permits.

- 4. Design features for safe pedestrian movement in the alley connecting Norfolk Avenue with Public Garage No. 11, must be provided at the time of site plan.
- 5. The applicant must provide ten bicycle parking spaces that include -- two inverted-U bike racks in front of the entrances to the ground-floor retail uses and eight bike lockers in the parking garage within 50 feet of the elevators. The Transportation Planning staff prior to approval of signature set will determine the ultimate location of the bicycle facilities.

DISCUSSION

Site Location, Access, and Parking

The subject site, Lot 657, is located at the south quadrant of Fairmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue. The site is located in the Parking lot district with Public Parking Garage No. 11, located on the adjoining southeastern property line. Vehicular access for the retail customers is proposed from the existing alley on Norfolk Avenue, into the Public Parking Garage No. 11. Vehicular access for the apartment residents is proposed from Fairmont Avenue into an underground parking garage. The service vehicles access is proposed from a loading dock off Fairmont Avenue.

Available Transit Service

Bethesda Metrorail station is located 1,500 feet to the south. Although no transit service is available along Fairmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue, Ride-On routes 42 and 92, Metrobus routes J-2. J-3, J-7, and J-9, all operate along nearby Woodmont Avenue.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks exist along Norfolk Avenue and Fairmont Avenue. The pedestrian facilities in the alley connecting Norfolk Avenue with Public Garage No. 11 are substandard and must be improved as addressed in Recommendation No. 4. The existing intersections have crosswalks and pedestrian signal heads at signalized intersections. The traffic signal timing at these intersections is set so that a pedestrian can cross the intersection at 3.0 feet per second.

Master-Planned Roadways

In accordance with the *Bethesda CBD Sector Plan*, Fairmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue are designated as business district streets; both are business district with different ROW with a recommended 60-foot and 80-foot right-of-way, respectively. Additional right-of-ways are required as described in Recommendation No. 2.

Sector-Planned Transportation Demand Management

The site is located in the Bethesda Transportation Management District. The applicant should participate in the Transportation Management organization (TMO) to assist in achieving its *Sector-Planned* traffic mitigation goal as described in Recommendation No. 3.

Local Area Transportation Review (LATR)

The proposed mixed-use development would generate the following peak-hour trips within the weekday morning peak period (6:30 to 9:30 a.m.) and the weekday evening peak period (4:00 to 7:00 p.m.):

Type of Land Use	Number of Units or Square Feet	Weekday Peak Hour	
	Square reet	Morning	Evening
Proposed Ground-Floor Retail Uses	5,500 sq. ft.	4	14
Proposed High-Rise Apartments	-Rise Apartments 118 units		35
TOTAL Peak-Hour Trips Generated	39	49	
Existing Retail/Restaurant Uses 14,186 sq. ft.		- 9	-37
Net Increase in Peak-Hour Trips		+30	+12

A traffic study was required to satisfy LATR, because the proposed mixed-use development generates 30 or more total peak-hour trips during the weekday morning and evening peak hours. The following table shows the Critical Lane Volume (CLV) values at the analyzed intersections:

Traffic Condition	Weekday Peak Hour	Traffic Condition		
		Existing	Background	Total
Norfolk Avenue and Saint Elmo Avenue	Morning	558	560	563
	Evening	831	836	836
Norfolk Avenue and Woodmont Avenue	Morning	852	860	875*
	Evening	673	701	703
Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont Avenue	Morning	1,136	1,146	1,152
	Evening	1,107	1,128	1,134
Old Georgetown Road and St. Elmo Avenue/Wilson Lane/Arlington Road	Morning	1,044	1,045	1,046
	Evening	1,243	1,247	1,247

^{*} At this intersection, the CLV in the morning peak hour is lower for the total traffic condition than the background traffic condition. This is due to the proposed mixed-use generating fewer peak-hour trips than the site's existing retail uses through the intersections critical movements.

The CLVs at all intersections are less than the 1,800 congestion standard for the Bethesda CBD Policy Area.

EA:jb

cc:

Marilyn Clemens Bob Dalrymple Chris Kabatt Chuck Kines

mmo to Aleshire re 4900 Fairmomnt 920070030