



Consent Item - Fairland Data Center: Site Plan Amendment No. 81991030A

MCS. Molline Smith, Senior Planner Area 3, Molline.Smith@montgomeryplanning.org, (301) 495-4573

RAW Richard Weaver, Supervisor Area 3, Richard.Weaver@montgomeryplanning.org, (301) 495-4544

JAC John Carter, Chief Area 3, John.Carter@montgomeryplanning.org, (301) 495-4575

Staff Report Date: 10/16/14

Description

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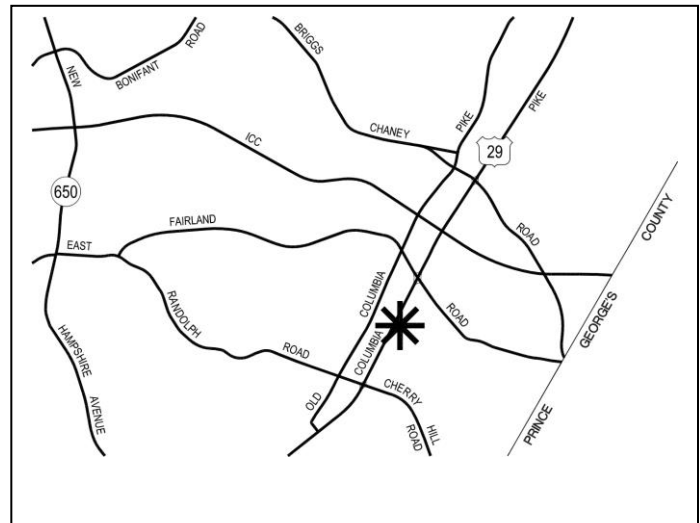
A request to install solar panels and revise the landscape plan, located along the east side of U.S. 29 between Fairland Road and Musgrove Road, 755,000 square feet of office, 36.5 acres, O-M Zone, Fairland Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

Applicant: Verizon Communication MD LLC.

Submittal Date: August 25, 2014

Review Basis: 59 D-3 Site Plans



Summary

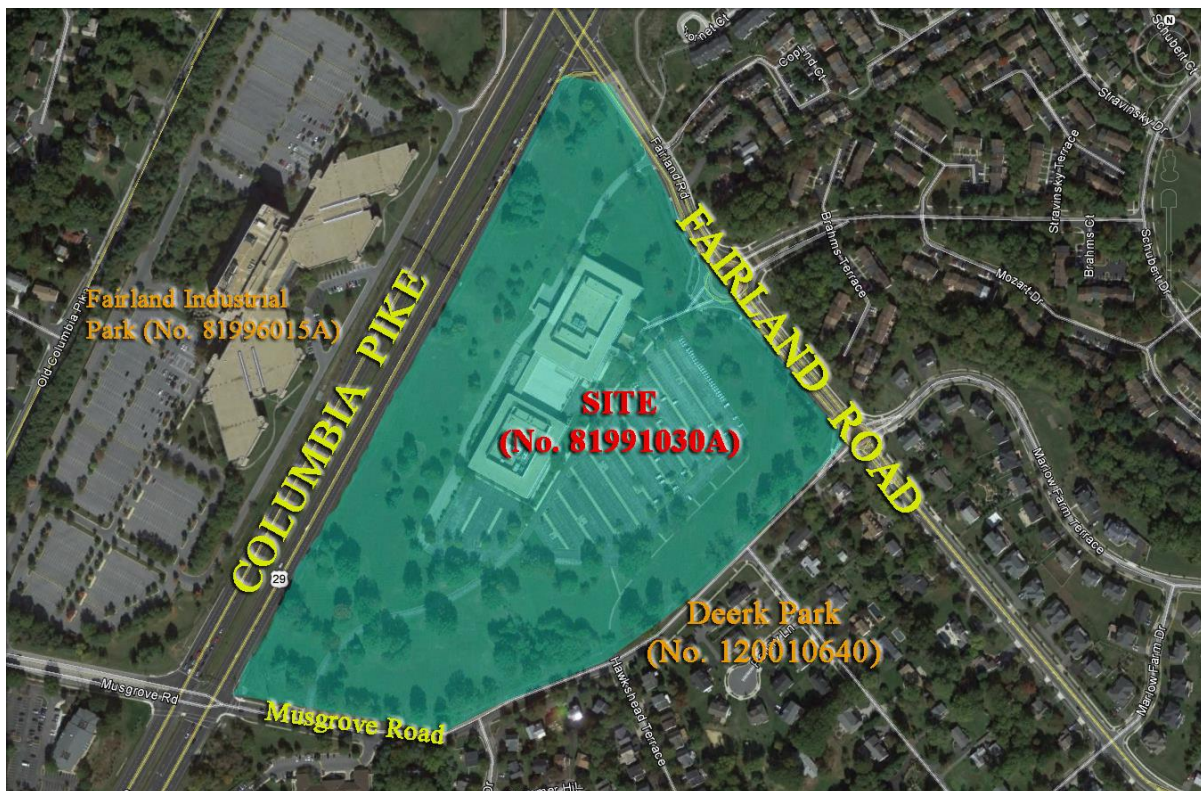
- The installation of solar panels is the result of Verizon Communications enacting renewable energy initiatives. The Company is one of the largest communication companies to use solar power. The energy supply generated from this amendment will reduce their demand on the grid by 6.2 percent of the building's total electrical usage, and also helps to meet their company goals of reducing their carbon footprint (50 percent reduction by 2020).
- Staff has not received any community correspondence with regard to this Site Plan Amendment; therefore, Staff recommends approval.
- The existing uses, number of parking spaces, and building height and setbacks will remain consistent with previous approvals.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposed modifications.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The Subject Property is located on the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Columbia Pike (US 29) and Musgrove Road at 13101 Columbia Pike. The overall property is 36.5-acres of land zoned O-M ("Subject Property" or "Property"). The Property has two access points, one off of Musgrove Road and one off of Fairland Road. The existing office building (i.e. the Data Center) fronts onto US 29 and has a large surface parking facility located southeast of the building, and directly adjacent to the Deer Park community (R-90 and R-200). There is also an existing pedestrian pathway within the large green area, between the parking facility and Musgrove Road.



Aerial Photo

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

On August 25, 2014, Verizon Communications MD LLC., ("Applicant") filed an application to amend the Certified Site Plan No. 819910300, Fairland Data Center. The Applicant requests approval of the following modifications:

- Installation of canopy-mounted and ground-mounted solar panels,
- Removal of existing trees, and
- Installation of 36 shrubs.



Image 2: Limits of Construction for the Subject Property

FINDINGS

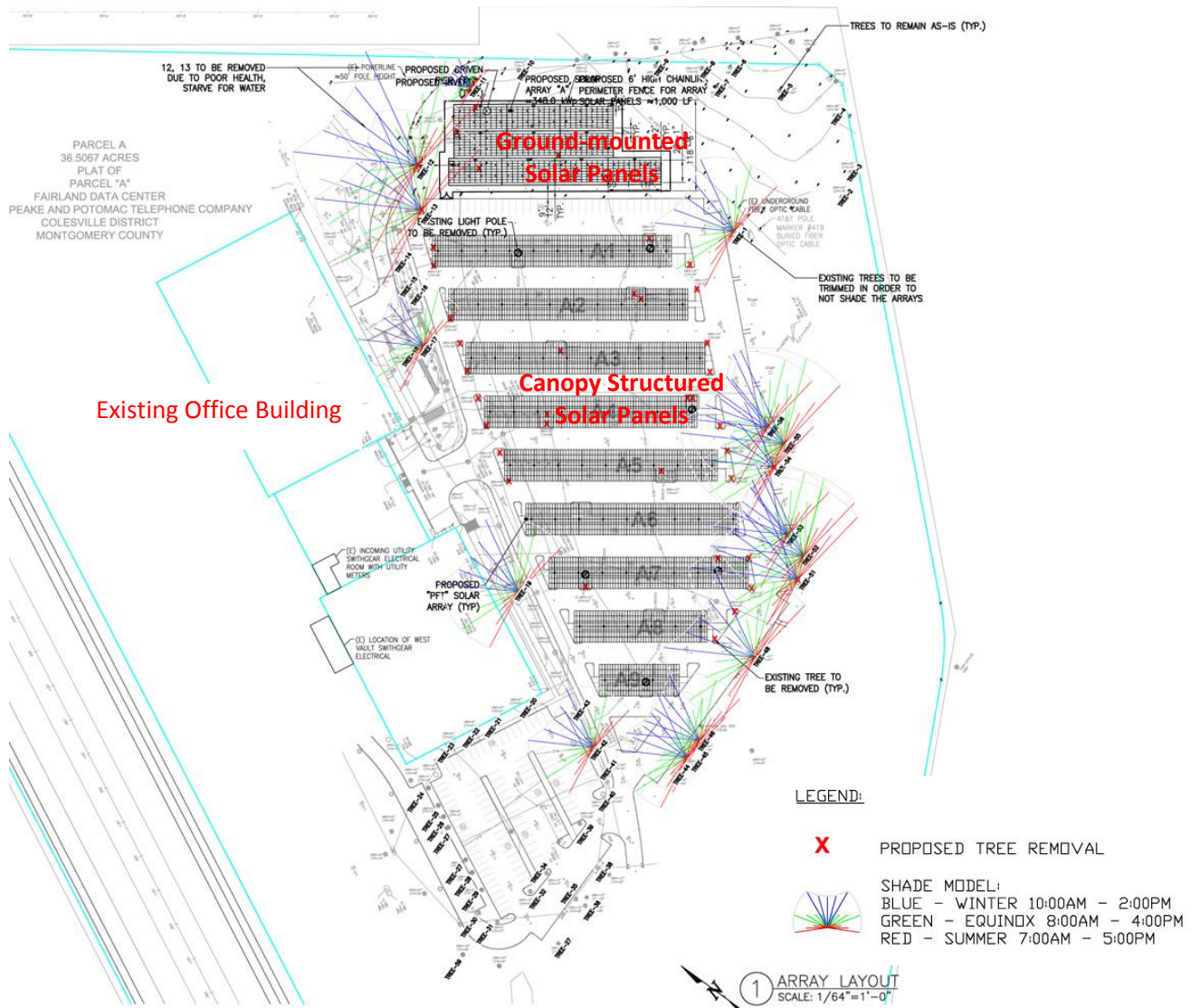
Conformance with the Zoning Ordinance

This Amendment conforms to the development standards in the O-M Zone, and is consistent with the previous approvals. This development predates the Site Plan review and approval process. However; this plan is subject to the requirements of the Local Map Amendment G-673, which was approved on January 17, 1991, and the conditions of approval for Site Plan No. 819910300 (i.e. previous approvals). The Site Plan was approved for 2,861 square foot addition for the installation of a generator vault on November 2, 1991. The building, height, gross floor area, setbacks and circulation systems will remain as previously approved.

Location of Buildings, Circulation, Open Space and Landscaping

The location of the buildings, circulation, open space and landscaping are adequate, safe and efficient as described in the following:

- **Buildings** – This Amendment proposes no changes to the existing building height and setbacks. The existing building fronts onto US 29 and is setback approximately 200-feet from the main roadway and 500-feet from the property edge (directly adjacent to the residential uses).



SITE PLAN: Shade Study

- Circulation** - The Amendment retains the existing pedestrian sidewalks and pathways throughout the Property. The existing surface parking facility is located between the building and Musgrove Road. The surface parking facility will be adequately screened from Musgrove Road and the residential community by the planted green space area and the existing setback (approximately \pm 250 feet). The solar panels will be located above the existing parking bays. They will not conflict with the existing drive aisles and access to the building. As indicated in the solar panel detail below, the canopy structures cover 18 bays of parking and will be elevated to a maximum height of 17 feet (a minimum tilt of 9 feet). The height provides adequate clearance for parked vehicles and emergency vehicles, without creating major visual impacts on the surrounding properties.



Solar Panels: Ground-mounted Structures

Forest Conservation

Of the existing trees to remain, 12 existing shade trees (30 inches and above in diameter) will be professionally pruned by a horticulturist and 43 trees will remain “as-is”. This application has a Forest Conservation Exemption No. 42015017E, under 22A-5(t) Modifications. Since the project is not subject to a Forest Conservation Plan no variance is required for this project.

OUTREACH AND CORRESPONDENCE

As required, the Applicant placed proper signage on the property and sent notices regarding the Amendments to all required parties by the Applicant on August 27, 2014. Staff received no inquiries regarding this specific Site Plan Amendment; however, the community has expressed concerns about the renovations that Pepco initiated within their respective easements.

CONCLUSION

The modifications to the Site Plan will not adversely impact the overall character or intent of the development with respect to the original findings. The existing uses, total number of parking spaces, building height and setbacks will remain consistent with the previous approvals. Furthermore, these modifications will improve the conditions of the existing parking facility and allow the Applicant an opportunity to reduce their carbon footprint. Staff recommends approval of this Site Plan Amendment.