

November 2, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Richard C. Hawthorne, Chief
Transportation Planning
County-wide Planning Division *RC*

Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor
Transportation Planning
County-wide Planning Division *DKH*

John Carter, Acting Team Leader *JC*
Bethesda-Chevy Chase/North Bethesda Team
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Shahriar Etemadi, Coordinator
Transportation Planning
County-wide Planning Division *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: Nebel Street Extended Facility Planning Study Phase I Recommendations

Recommendation: Transmit the following comments to the Department of Public Works and Transportation

1. The Nebel Street Extended Facility Planning Study should proceed to Phase II of the Facility Planning process, developing detailed design for a business district street with a four-lane cross-section within an 80-foot right-of-way between Randolph Road and Chapman Avenue, as recommended in the Draft Project Prospectus.
2. During detailed design, the following items should be considered:
 - a. Provisions for a future "kiss and ride" lot on the outside of the horizontal curve near the location for a future MARC station recommended in the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan

- b. Allowing either off-peak or full-time on-street parking for portions of the curb lane
 - c. Continuing to seek participation from potential developers of the B.F. Saul property
 - d. Removing either a portion of the former Levitz Furniture warehouse or the entire building
 - e. Further investigation and preservation of environmental resources where possible
 - f. Ensuring that the connections for the project's bicycle and pedestrian facilities transition to existing facilities is in a manner consistent with the Master Plan.
- 3. Continue coordination with State Highway Administration on the MD 355/ Montrose Road/Randolph Road Intersection Improvement Study, in particular to:
 - a. Revise the ultimate design of the Nebel Street Extended intersection with Randolph Road to reflect the preferred alternative for the relocation of Randolph Road.
 - b. Coordinate project schedules so that the Nebel Street Extended project can serve as part of the maintenance of traffic during construction along Rockville Pike and Randolph Road.
- 4. Retain the proposed 30 MPH design speed for the project.
- 5. During the detailed design phase, submit a Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD) to Environmental Planning and receive approval prior to submitting the mandatory referral packet.

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

The purpose of this briefing is to provide comments regarding the recommendations of Phase I of the Facility Planning study by the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) for Nebel Street Extended between Randolph Road and Chapman Avenue. The study area is shown in Exhibit 1.

DPWT has completed Phase I of the Facility Planning study and prepared a Draft Project Prospectus to document the Phase I findings and recommended alternative to carry forward into detailed design during Phase II. The recommended alternative is a four-lane business-district street within an 80' right-of-way and a typical cross-section as shown in Exhibit 2. Exhibits 3 and 4 provide a concept plan view of the northern and southern halves of the project, respectively.

The briefing also provides staff the opportunity to update the Planning Board on two items directly related to the design and implementation of Nebel Street Extended:

- The current status of the SHA MD 355/Montrose Road/Randolph Road Intersection Improvement Study at the southern end of Nebel Street Extended.
- The decision by the applicant proposing a Home Depot on the B.F. Saul property at the northern end of Nebel Street Extended to indefinitely postpone the development project.

PREVIOUS PLANNING BOARD ACTIONS

During the past year, the Planning Board has acted on both SHA's study and Home Depot on the B.F. Saul property, as described below.

The Planning Board reviewed the MD 355/Montrose Road/Randolph Road Intersection Improvement Study on December 14, 2000. In a December 28, 2000 letter to the State Highway Administration (SHA), included as Attachment A, the Planning Board provided guidance to SHA that the study should not review further the two alternatives that include both a continuous Montrose Parkway and a continuous Montrose Road/Randolph Road connection across Rockville Pike.

SHA has scheduled a Location and Design Public Hearing for the MD 355/Montrose Road/Randolph Road Intersection Improvement Study on December 3, 2001. Staff anticipates providing recommendations on SHA's study to the Planning Board in late January, 2002.

The Planning Board approved Site Plan No. 8-01002, for Washington-Rockville Industrial Park (Home Depot) on February 15, 2001, as indicated in Attachment B. The transportation conditions for approval of this application was stated in the Planning staff memo dated February 2, 2001. One important condition of the approval was to guarantee the construction of Nebel Street along the frontage of the property within an 80-foot right-of-way with appropriate turning lanes, sidewalks, and landscaping in accordance with DPWT's requirements.

The applicant agreed to other conditions such as additional cost sharing with the County for building the remaining portions of Nebel Street and dedication of right-of-way and construction of the Nebel Street intersection with Chapman and Bou Avenues.

Staff understands that Home Depot has indefinitely postponed plans to develop/build this site. Therefore, the developer's financial contribution to this project is probably lost unless another applicant assumes the cost responsibility.

As part of the negotiations with the site plan for Home Depot, the Study Team agreed that a 30 MPH design speed would be acceptable for the Nebel Street Extended project, in lieu of the 35 MPH design speed originally considered and shown on Exhibit 3. The 30 MPH design speed was based on alignment modifications suggested by engineers working on the Home Depot project to maximize the developable site plan

area. Staff recommends that the 30 MPH design speed remains an appropriate design speed for the project, although the recommended alignment (that meets criteria for both a 35 MPH design speed as well as for a 30 MPH design speed) shown in Exhibit 3 also remains appropriate to preserve the kiss-and-ride lot potential.

MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY

The 1992 Master Plan North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan recommends the construction of Nebel Street Extended between Randolph Road and Chapman Avenue as a four lane business district street (B-5) within an 80-foot right-of-way. Nebel Street Extended facilitates the north-south movement of traffic in this area, and provides an alternative to Rockville Pike route for local traffic. **The proposed alternative is consistent with the Master Plan.**

The study team recommends further consideration of two potential refinements of this project during the detailed design phase of the study. The current traffic study shows that two through lanes will accommodate the year 2020 travel demand. Consideration could be given to allowing on-street parking in the outside travel lanes. The on-street parking could be converted into traffic lanes if the future increase in traffic warrants additional lanes on Nebel Street Extended. This treatment would be similar to the current operations along the existing portion of Nebel Street, south of Randolph Road.

The proposed plan also provides for an 5-foot sidewalk on the west side and an 8-foot the east side of the road. The design also includes appropriate landscaping of the road. Additionally, the plan provides space for a future "kiss and ride" lot on the east side of the road near the future MARC station also proposed in the 1992 Master Plan.

SUMMARY OF FACILITY PLANNING STUDY FINDINGS

The proposed alternative for the Nebel Street Extended would provide a key link in the vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation network between the White Flint and Twinbrook Sector Plan areas within the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan Area. The project would:

- Carry approximately 18,000 vehicles per day in the year 2020, providing relief to Chapman Avenue and Rockville Pike
- Provide for intersection level-of-service (LOS) C or better at the project termini at Randolph Road and at Bou/Chapman Avenues

The proposed alternative would result in the displacement of three existing business properties. Two of these properties, at 5501 and 5505 Randolph Road, are on the northern side of the existing "T" intersection of Randolph Road and Nebel Street. These impacts are unavoidable and were anticipated in the Master Plan vision for Nebel Street. The third property contains the vacant, former Levitz Furniture warehouse on GSF Realty property north of the Montrose Parkway right-of-way. The proposed

alternative would require removal of the northeastern corner of the warehouse, or about 1,000 square feet of the 15,000 square foot warehouse. The study team evaluated warehouse avoidance and minimization options; both require a reduction in the number of travel lanes and substandard landscape panels for the short (approximately 200') section affected. The study team concluded that the avoidance and minimization options should not be studied further during detailed design. Staff concurs with that finding and recommends that options to remove either a portion of the warehouse or the entire warehouse be reviewed further during detailed design.

The proposed alternative would also require property from two additional parcels; approximately 2.40 acres of the 19.58 acre B. F. Saul property and approximately 0.15 acres from the Bou Property.

Opportunities to involve potential developers of the vacant or underutilized properties should be sought. However, staff concurs with the Executive staff that the Nebel Street Extended project should continue through the CIP process even without developer funding, because Nebel Street Extended will serve as a relief valve during the State's construction of improvements to Rockville Pike at Montrose Road and Randolph Road.

The project has the following impacts to the natural environment:

- A total of 1.78 acres in three forest stands, including two specimen trees
- Potential impacts to four isolated areas resembling wetlands based on observed hydrology and vegetation, requiring delineation during detailed design

The project has an estimated capital cost of approximately \$3 million to \$5 million for construction. The costs of right-of-way and engineering will be developed during the detailed design phase.

NEXT STEPS

Phase II of the Facility Planning study for Nebel Street Extended is expected to take approximately 18 months to complete. During Phase II, detailed engineering and cost estimates will be prepared so that the project can be included as a candidate for engineering and construction funding as part of the Capital Improvement Program.

During Phase II, this project will return to the Planning Board as a Mandatory Referral. Prior to submission of the mandatory referral, DPWT needs to prepare a Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation. This document, essentially a repackaging of material in the Draft Project Prospectus, should be submitted to Environmental Planning in the County-wide Planning Division so that it can be approved prior to submitting the mandatory referral packet.

As part of the mandatory referral packet, the following information must also be submitted:

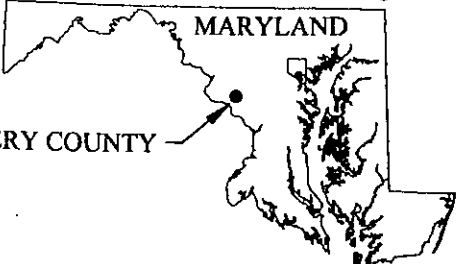
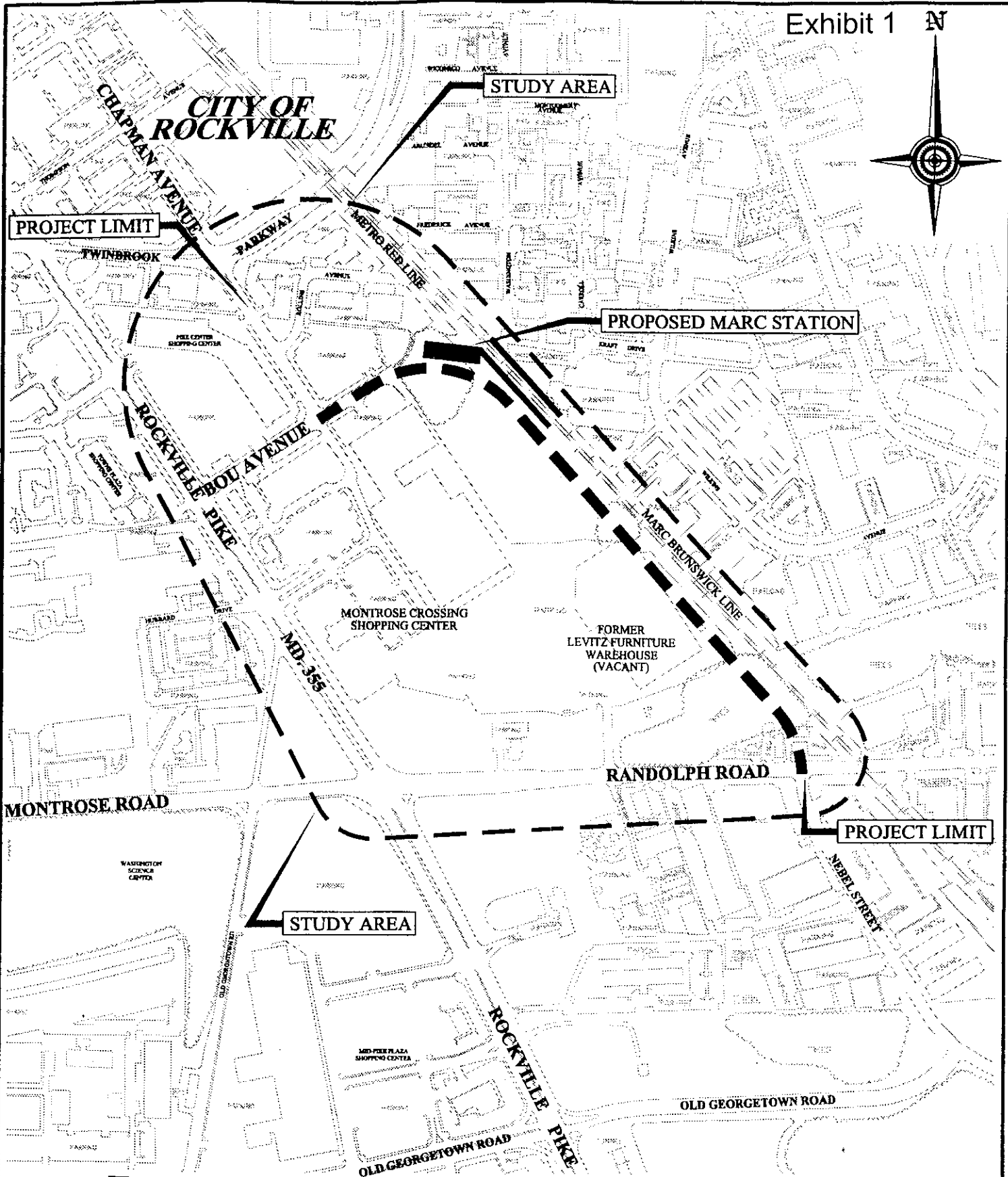
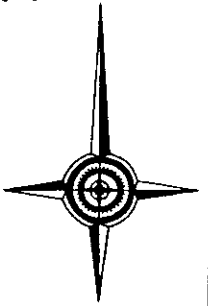
- A forest conservation plan (FCP)
- A stormwater management concept plan
- A wetlands mitigation plan, if the project disturbs any wetlands.

During detailed design, additional review of the project's pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing facilities will be conducted. Specific areas of interest should include:

- Coordination with the City of Rockville regarding the design of the northern portion of the Nebel Street Extended Class I bikeway and its ultimate connection to Parklawn Drive as envisioned in the North Bethesda/Garrett Park Master Plan.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections at the project's southern terminus at the intersection of Nebel Street and Randolph Road.

SE:cmd

Nebel Street Extended FPS.doc



NEBEL STREET EXTENDED

DRAFT: WORK-IN-PROGRESS



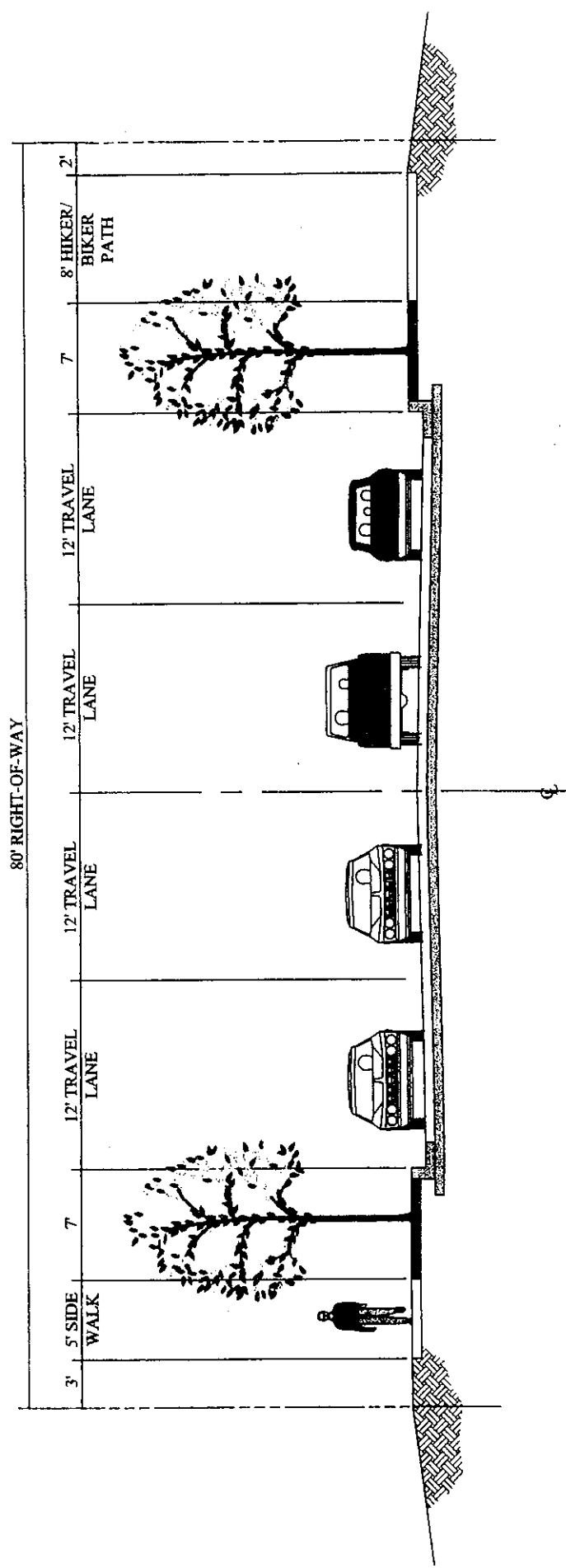
STUDY AREA MAP

DATE:
JANUARY 2001
SCALE:
1" = 500'

URS
Engineers/Architects/Planners/Surveyors
4 NORTH PARK DRIVE, SUITE 300
HUNT VALLEY, MARYLAND 21030
TELEPHONE: 410-788-7220

FIGURE:
I-4

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PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION

NEBEL STREET EXTENDED
DRAFT: WORK-IN-PROGRESS



PROPOSED TYPICAL SECTION

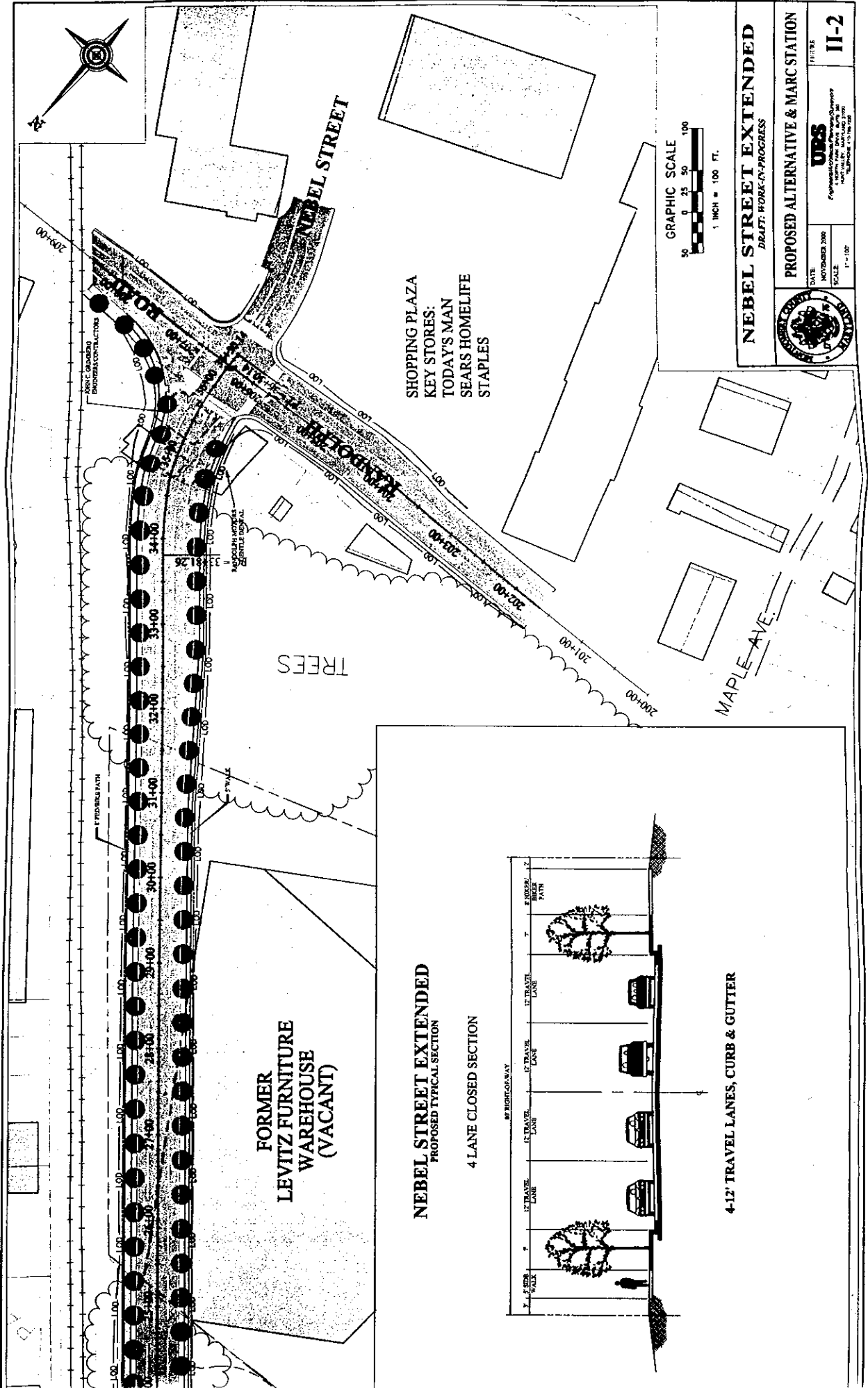
URS
 Engineers/Architects/Planners/Scientists
 4100 WOODBURN DRIVE, SUITE 200
 HART VILLAGE, MARYLAND 21039
 TELEPHONE: 410-765-7220

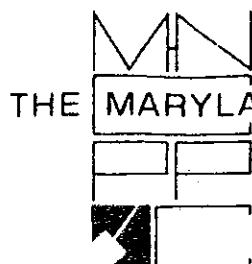
DATE: JANUARY 2001
 SCALE: N.T.S.

FIGURE: **II-4**

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THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

(301) 495-4605

Montgomery County Planning Board
Office of the Chairman

December 28, 2000

Mr. Neil J. Pedersen
Deputy Administrator for Planning
and Preliminary Engineering
State Highway Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation
707 North Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21203-0717

Dear Mr. Pedersen:

Thank you for your briefing of December 14 to the Planning Board regarding the MD 355-Montrose Road/Randolph Road intersection project planning study. The Board concurred with the staff recommendation:

Do not carry forward the "M-NCPPC #2" and "M-NCPPC #3" alternatives as Alternatives Retained for Detailed Study (ARDS). At the July 20, 2000 project briefing, the Planning Board recommended that these two alternatives be retained for detailed study. SHA has subsequently documented that other alternatives proposed for ARDS are superior to the "M-NCPPC #2" and "M-NCPPC #3" alternatives. The Planning Board recommendation that these two alternatives be retained as ARDS should therefore be changed.

We remain interested in future responses to the remaining recommendations developed as a result of the July 20 briefing. These recommendations include coordination with other transportation projects and programs providing a systemic approach to addressing transportation needs in the project vicinity.

As we have discussed, the complexity of transportation needs in the Montrose Crossing area of North Bethesda requires extraordinary interagency coordination in project planning, design, and implementation. We appreciate your responsiveness to our concerns to date and your continuing deliberative and sensitive approach to addressing those transportation needs. We look forward to reviewing the findings developed during detailed study.

Sincerely,

William H. Hussmann
Chairman

WHH:DKH:cmd

cc: Albert Genetti

EXHIBIT B

OPINION

DATE MAILED: March 9, 2001
SITE PLAN REVIEW: # 8-01002
PROJECT: HOME DEPOT ROCKVILLE

Action: Approval subject to conditions. Motion was made by Commissioner Holmes, seconded by Commissioner Bryant, with a vote of 4-0, Commissioners Holmes, Bryant, Hussmann and Wellington voting for. Commissioner Perdue was necessarily absent.

The date of this written opinion is March 9, 2001. Any party authorized by law to take an administrative appeal must initiate such an appeal, as provided in the Maryland Rules of Procedure, on or before April 9, 2001. If no administrative appeal is timely filed, this site plan shall remain valid until the expiration of the project's APFO approval, as provided in Section 59-D-3.8.

On February 15, 2001, Site Plan Review # 8-01002 was brought before the Montgomery County Planning Board for a public hearing. At the public hearing, the Montgomery County Planning Board heard testimony and received evidence submitted in the record on the application. Based on the testimony and evidence presented and on the staff report which is made a part hereof, the Montgomery County Planning Board finds:

1. The Site Plan is consistent with the approved development plan or a project plan for the optional method of development, if required;
2. The Site Plan meets all of the requirements of the zone in which it is located;
3. The locations of the buildings and structures, the open spaces, the landscaping, the recreational facilities, and the pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems are adequate, safe and efficient;
4. Each structure and use is compatible with other uses and other site plans and with existing and proposed adjacent development;

5. The site plan meets all applicable requirements of Chapter 22A regarding forest conservation.

The Montgomery County Planning Board APPROVES Site Plan Review # 8-01002, which consists of 130,280 gsf of retail use plus outdoor garden center and seasonal sales area on 7.66 gross acres, subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Conditions of Approval, dated October 10, 1995.
 - A. Submit a Site Plan Enforcement Agreement and Development Program for review and approval prior to approval of the signature set as follows:
 - i. Development Program to include a phasing schedule as follows:
 - a. Landscaping associated with each parking area, drop off area, and/or building shall be completed as construction of the facility is completed.
 - b. Pedestrian pathways and seating areas associated with the building shall be completed with the construction.
 - c. Clearing and grading to correspond to minimize soil erosion.
 - d. Phasing of conveyance of Nebel, stormwater management, sediment/erosion control.
 - B. Signature set of site, landscape/lighting and sediment and erosion control plans to include for staff review prior to approval by Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS):
 - i. Limits of disturbance;
 - ii. Methods and location of tree protection;
 - iii. Conditions of DPS Stormwater Management Concept letter dated August 25, 1999;
 - iv. Note stating the M-NCPPC staff must inspect tree protection devices prior to clearing and grading;
 - C. No clearing or grading prior to M-NCPPC approval of signature set of plans.
2. Conditions of Transportation Planning staff memo dated February 2, 2001,
3. Conditions of DPS letter of June 7, 2001
4. Applicant to construct Bou Avenue between Chapman and the lease line separating the subject site and the Montrose Crossing Phase III housing site. The street shall be constructed per designs approved by MCDPWT, which may include a right turn lane on the north side, made possible by an additional dedication of five feet of right of way from the property on the north side of Bou. This requirement was originated as a condition of approval of the Montrose Crossing Site Plan for Phases I b and II, the Board on June 29, 1995.

5. Guarantee the construction of Nebel Street along the frontage of the property within an 80-foot ROW. Applicant is responsible for financing the construction of two lanes plus any required turning lanes, curb, street trees, and sidewalks on the west side of Nebel Street, full width grading of the right-of-way, drainage and storm water management. In addition, applicant is responsible for its fair share of the rest of the project, as determined by DPWT and the applicant, to be negotiated on the basis of reasonable proportionality of traffic volume total traffic volume projected for completed Nebel Street.
6. Conveyance of the right of way for Bou Avenue was required by condition of approval of the 1995 Montrose Crossing Site Plan, which required conveyance at time of 100% funding within four years of the street in the County's CIP program. Since the applicant is conveying the part of Nebel along its frontage and building Bou Avenue along with Nebel, the timing of conveyance of Bou will heretofore be determined by the 100% funding of the remainder of Nebel south of the subject property, to conform to the 1995 condition.
7. MCDPWT approval of grade alignment and cross section of Bou Avenue prior to any clearing, grading or ground disturbance anywhere on the site.
8. The location and design of a crosswalk across Nebel to connect the garage to the future MARC station shall be included on the Signature Set. Such crosswalk shall have been conditionally approved by MCDPWT.
9. The final approved Forest Conservation Plan shall be amended as part of the Signature Set to provide for the possibility that the area designated as tree-save might be used for a MARC station, i.e. additional off-site reforestation would be required in that event.
10. Signature Set plans shall address and remedy the possible hazard of pedestrian shoppers crossing the Nebel entrance to the garage, namely that visibility of these pedestrians may be compromised by the sudden drop in light levels as drivers enter the garage.
11. Storm water quantity control structure below loading dock paving shall be located so as not to conflict with landscape screening flanking the loading dock entrances from Nebel.
12. Applicant shall enter into an agreement with MCDPWT for the construction of two prototype bus shelters, specifications and locations subject to MCDPWT approval.
13. Applicant to commit to entering into a shared parking space agreement with MCDPWT and MARC, in case parking is needed for a future MARC station at the north Corner of the site. Commitment shall specify number and location of shared spaces. Agreement shall be made part of the Site Plan Enforcement Agreement.
14. In the event that a decision is made within ten years that the MARC station is to be located on the north corner of the site between the Nebel ROW and the property line, applicant shall convey the property to Montgomery County for this purpose.
15. Applicant shall submit refined Landscape and Lighting plans for staff approval as part of the Signature Set.
16. MCDPWT approval of grade alignment and cross section of Nebel Street prior to any clearing, grading or ground disturbance anywhere on the site.