



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

February 13, 2004

Elizabeth B. Davison
Director

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Development Review Division
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Attn: Mr. Malcolm Shaneman, Supervisor

Re: Safeway Store Expansion at Kensington

Dear Mr. Shaneman:

The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) wishes to indicate general support of the proposed Safeway grocery store project which we believe will strengthen the retail component of the Kensington community. This project is in the Antique Row revitalization area where County staff has been working with Town officials, business operators, property owners, historic interests and residents to create, through public and private investment, a more viable and attractive retail environment. The Safeway project is an important contributor to the revitalization effort. There have been a number of private investments in the area and the Safeway project is the largest.

Over the past few years, DHCA completed streetscape improvements along Howard Avenue, Antique Row, and Armory Avenue. Additionally, DHCA designed and installed gateway signs at critical approaches to the Town of Kensington along with a major "Antique Row" sign at the intersection of Howard Avenue with Connecticut Avenue. This spring we will finish the scope of the County's project with additional landscaping at Howard Avenue Park, a streetlight at Fawcett Street, and four trailblazing signs at other approaches to the town.

In order to assure that the Safeway project fits into the revitalization area, we ask that the developer be required to implement the streetscape design that the Town has adopted for adjacent street frontages. This will save the public a significant expense in making those improvements in the public rights-of-way along Armory Avenue, Howard Avenue, and Knowles Avenue. The major, vertical components are the Thornless Honeylocust (*Gleditsia Triacanthos* 'Inermis') street trees at approximately 30 ft. on center along the Howard Avenue Antique Row and the Washington Globe Type 'A' streetlights at about 60 ft. on center. Following are observations about each street edge that abuts the Safeway site.



Division of Community Development

Federal Programs, 240/777-3600, FAX 240/777-3655 • Planning and Commercial Revitalization, 240/777-3600, FAX 240/777-3632
100 Maryland Avenue, 4th Floor • Rockville, Maryland 20850-2419
<http://hca.emontgomery.org>

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1. Armory Avenue: The east side of Armory Avenue is streetscaped with dimpled concrete walks and pink tinted driveway aprons. We suggest repeating these features along the Safeway side of the street. The street tree along Armory Avenue is Acer Rubrum 'Red Sunset'.
2. Howard Avenue: We suggest the continuation of the dimpled concrete sidewalk along the right-of-way. The street trees along Howard Avenue are the Thornless Honeylocust. For pedestrian safety, there should be a few more streetlights (approximately at 60 ft. o.c.) and the outdoor staircase needs to be well lit with walk lights.
3. Knowles Avenue: The streetlights and trees need to be extended west of the proposed driveway. Outdoor staircases need to be lit with walk lights.
4. The Gateway Sign: The gateway sign at the corner of Connecticut Avenue and Howard Avenue has a freestanding Safeway sign near it. With a new Safeway sign proposed at the entrance portal, the existing Safeway sign near the "Antique Row" landmark sign will no longer be needed. We recommend the removal of this freestanding sign and embellishing the "Antique Row" sign area with appropriate site work and landscaping.

We thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important project. If you wish to discuss our comments, please call David Chikvashvili at (240)777-3644 or Wajeda Rab at (240)777-3647.

Sincerely,



Thomas I. Miner
Chief

TIM:wr

cc: Ms Kitty L. Raufaste, Mayor, Town of Kensington
Elizabeth B. Davison, Director, Department of Housing and Community Affairs



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Attachment B

July 22, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: Richard Weaver, Subdivision Coordinator
Development Review Division

FROM: John A. Carter, Chief *JAC*
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: Kensington Safeway # 1-03075

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the proposed Preliminary Plan

DISCUSSION:

The proposed development conforms to the Sector Plan for the Town of Kensington. The relevant Sector Plan, *Approved and Adopted Sector Plan for the Town of Kensington (1978)*, provides little guidance for the specific site. The site is zoned C-2. Knowles Avenue has a proposed right-of-way of 80 feet. Since the Sector Plan was approved in 1978, there have been a number of changes in the Sector Plan area. The Sector Plan recommended an historic district and one was created that encompasses all the commercial buildings on Armory Street opposite the Safeway property.

Within the last few years, the Town of Kensington has improved Howard Avenue and Armory Street. Street furniture, such as lighting fixtures, benches, brick pavers and street trees have been placed on these streets and throughout the commercial area.

Safeway has acquired all but two properties on the block formed by the four streets, Armory Street, Howard Avenue, Knowles Avenue and Connecticut Avenue, in order to facilitate expansion. Safeway's intent is to build approximately 54,235 square feet with 258 parking spaces, of which 166 are in the lower level and 96 are on the surface lot. The new Safeway will include an expanded food store and ancillary services such as a bank, Starbuck's Coffee, drycleaner, and pharmacy.

JAC:BB:ha: g:\barron\Kensington Safeway #1-03075