



Item # 2  
MCPB  
4.07.05

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK & PLANNING COMMISSION

**DATE:** March 30, 2005  
**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board  
**VIA:** Rose G. Krasnow, Chief *RGK*  
Michael Ma, Supervisor  
Development Review Division  
**FROM:** Mary Beth O'Quinn *MBO*  
Planning Department Staff  
(301) 495-1322



**REVIEW TYPE:** Site Plan Review  
**APPLYING FOR:** Approval of 5,595 square feet general office space  
That includes 3,730 square feet FAR density and 1,865 square feet cellar space,  
with a waiver of parking standards (6 spaces).

**PROJECT NAME:** Orchard Avenue Office  
**CASE #:** 8-03032A (Amendment)  
**REVIEW BASIS:** Site Plan required for the Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone:  
for waiver of parking standards [§59-C-18.213(a)]  
for allowance of additional building height [§59-C-18.213(c)]

**ZONE:** C-2 and the Takoma Park Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone (CROZ)  
**LOCATION:** Orchard Avenue, 140 feet W-NW of Sligo Mill Road  
**MASTER PLAN:** Takoma Park  
**APPLICANT:** Orchard Avenue Office, LLC (Dan Robinson)  
**FILING DATE:** March 15, 2005  
**HEARING DATE:** April 7, 2005

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### SUMMARY

The proposed Amendment of the *Orchard Avenue Office* addresses the alteration of the approved site plan to incorporate 1,865 square feet of the building's cellar area as ancillary office space. The applicant seeks a corresponding adjustment in the waiver of parking standards as previously approved. The previous site plan required 10 parking spaces, and, as approved by the Planning Board, provided eight on-site parking spaces, with a waiver of two spaces. The amended plan, under current review, requires 14 parking spaces, attributable to the additional cellar office space. The applicant proposes eight on-site spaces, and requests a waiver of parking standards for six spaces.

The proposed amendment application diminishes slightly the approved, above-ground FAR office density (Floor Area Ratio) from 3,996 square feet to 3,730 square feet, and adds 1,865 square feet of leasable below-grade cellar space. The proposed changes are prompted by the refinement of the architectural plans and details pursuant to execution of the construction documents.

All other aspects of the approved plan, including building location and footprint, allowance for additional building height, green space, streetscape, pedestrian accommodation, on site parking, and vehicular circulation remain as approved by the Planning Board on July 24, 2003.

**Proposal:** The altered building plan will incorporate 1,595 square feet of cellar space as finished office space. The subject area was previously shown on the approved preliminary plan and site plan as unfinished storage. The FAR density (the building's upper levels) will provide 3,730 square feet of office space, representing a decrease in density previously approved by Preliminary Plan 1-03082 and Site Plan 8-03032.

The new, finished space features direct pedestrian access from Orchard Avenue, a highly desirable element facilitated by the proposed architecture that employs the site's topography to full advantage. The additional 1,595 feet is considered "Non-FAR" space attributed to its classification as "cellar," the supplemental offices impose a parking requirement of four additional spaces, that is, increasing the total parking requirement to 14 parking spaces.

The amendment application requests Planning Board consideration of a waiver of parking standards with respect to the number of parking spaces provided on site. The previous approval granted a waiver of two spaces; the current application requests a waiver of six spaces.

#### **Development Review Issues:**

Staff supports the applicant's proposal to incorporate the additional cellar space for office use for the following reasons:

#### Master Plan

- The additional office space will contribute to increased pedestrian activity on Orchard Avenue;
- Office spaces provides a commercial use that offers a compatible land use transition between the highly commercial area to the east and the residential blocks to the west;
- The office use approved for this site and the proposed amendment for 5,595 square feet will foster economic vitality and attractive community character;
- The active use of the lower building level will enhance the structure's appearance and improve the façade facing Orchard Avenue.

#### Zoning Ordinance

- The proposed site plan meets the intent of the C-2 Zone and the Commercial Revitalization Zone
- The proposed plan conforms to the requirements of the C-2 Zone and the Commercial Revitalization Zone

#### Request for Parking Waiver

Staff supports the applicant's request for a waiver to reduce the number of parking spaces supplied on site because the proposed plan, utilizing the parking waiver will accomplish the goals of the Master Plan and conforms to the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Staff has included a condition of approval for this site plan amendment that incorporates all of the conditions of approval of the approved site plan