

Oblique aerial photograph showing the proposed site within the context of the Takoma Park Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone. The red asterisk marks the site. The variety of commercial interests may be seen fronting on New Hampshire Avenue, including automobile supply shops, automobile service stations, and fast food outlets. Eastern Avenue, representing the Montgomery County-District of Columbia boundary is seen at top.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of 5,595 square feet general office space on 0.12 acres in the C-2 and the Takoma Park Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone, of which 3,730 square feet constitutes FAR density and 1,865 square feet is non-FAR cellar space, with a waiver per §59-C-18.213 of six parking spaces, subject to the following conditions:

1. Previous Approvals

Conditions of all previous approvals remain in full force and effect except as specifically modified by this approval:

- a. The plan shall comply with the conditions of approval for Site Plan 8-03032;
- b. The plan shall comply with the conditions of approval for Preliminary Plan 1-03082;

2. Stormwater Management

Conditions of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland Stormwater Permit approval renewal dated December 6, 2004.

3. Signature Set

Prior to signature approval of the site/landscape plans the following revisions must be made and/or information provided on the site plan, subject to staff review and approval:

- a. Incorporate an area plan showing On-Street Parking as part of the Signature Set.

4. Site Plan Enforcement Agreement

As part of the signature set, revise the Site Plan Enforcement Agreement pertaining to the previous approval 8-03003, to reflect the current proposal.



Aerial Photograph showing the Orchard Avenue Office site. The subject parcel lies within 600 feet of New Hampshire Avenue to the east and about 1,500 feet north of the District of Columbia –Montgomery County line.

ISSUES OF SITE PLAN REVIEW

In the course of site plan review for the subject amendment, staff and applicant reviewed the on-site parking supply as proposed, and the supply and location of off street parking within the immediate neighborhood.

1. Waiver of Minimum Number of Parking Spaces §59-C-18.213

The development parcel has several significant constraints: size, topographic slopes, and access. These features limit the amount of parking that may be feasibly accommodated on the site. Section 59-C-18.213(a)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance allows the Planning Board to waive the requirements for the number of parking spaces if such waiver will accomplish the goals of the Master Plan, including revitalization and encouraging the use of transit.

Applicant Position: The applicant requests a waiver (six spaces) from the parking requirement of 14 spaces. The requirement is 14 spaces; the proposal provides 8 spaces.

Community Position: The Pinecrest Neighborhood Association, Inc. supports the Site Plan as amended, per letter from Nellie Moxley, President, dated March 10, 2005.

City Position: The City of Takoma Park supports the applicant's request for a waiver of six parking spaces per Resolution #2005-21, dated March 21, 2005.

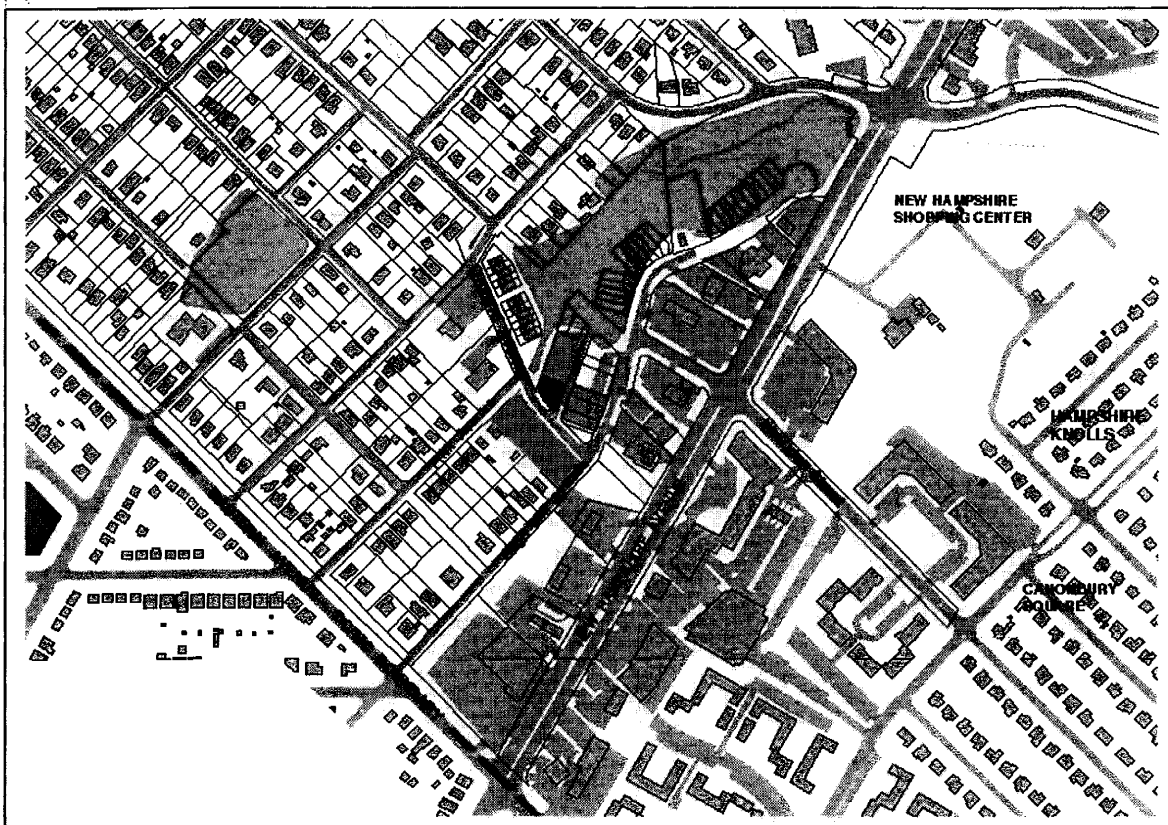
Staff Recommendation: Staff supports the applicant's request for a waiver of the required parking spaces for the following reasons:

- The applicant has agreed to provide a bench for the nearest bus stop on New Hampshire Avenue;
- The applicant has indicated that some staff members are local Takoma Park residents who may walk or bicycle to the site;
- On-street parking is available and the construction of the new curb line will facilitate on-street parking;
- The area map delineating on-street parking shows an adequate supply, including: 15 curb-side spaces on the north side of Orchard Avenue, requiring no street crossings; 20 spaces curb-side along the boundaries of the MNCPPC park on the south side of Orchard Avenue, requiring one street crossing; 24 additional curb-side spaces within two blocks. The existing curbside parking available within a two block area totals 59 spaces; existing surrounding commercial businesses provide more than 100 off-street spaces.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Surrounding Vicinity

The property is located on Orchard Avenue 140 feet west/northwest of Sligo Mill Road in Takoma Park, Maryland. The site lies approximately 500-600 feet west of New Hampshire Avenue and 850 feet north of Eastern Avenue, the boundary between the District of Columbia and Montgomery County. New Hampshire Avenue functions as the formal gateway to Montgomery County for this eastern county area. The site zoning is designated as C-2 with the Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone application.

To the east, the site is bounded by a public alley that represents the highest elevation point of the block. The alley is adjoined on its east by a large 2-story commercial building with frontage on both Orchard Avenue and Sligo Mill Road. This building forms the end piece of a block of commercial uses along Sligo Mill Road that is zoned C-2. To the west of the property, a wooded area contains a portion of the Takoma Branch Stream that feeds into the Sligo Creek watershed. This small residual piece of land, owned by M-NCPPC, has been planted with a variety of native understory trees and hardwoods. It provides a modest buffer between the commercially zoned area immediately to the east and the townhouses (RT-8) to its west. Directly south, across Orchard Avenue, is a vacant land parcel currently being acquired as parkland by M-NCPPC.



Vicinity Map showing Takoma Park, and the New Hampshire Avenue gateway to Montgomery County