

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Site Description



view from the south

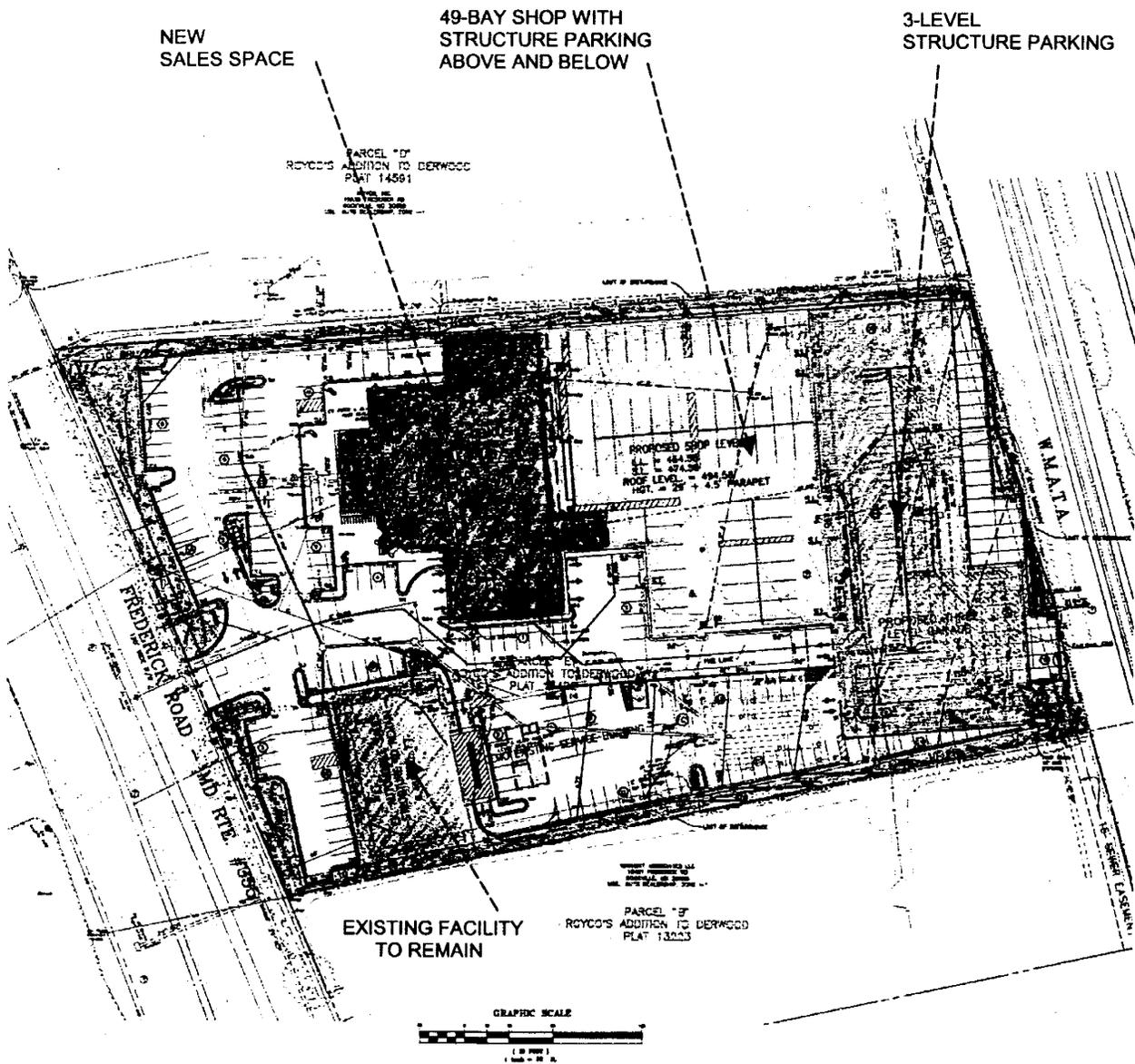
The property is developed with two buildings, a total of 36,734 square feet, in the front portion of the site and a stormwater management facility in the southwestern corner. It is currently occupied by a Lexus dealership with extensive surface parking areas throughout the site. The topography of the site slopes down approximately 20 feet from Frederick Road toward the eastern property line.



view from the west

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Proposal

The subject application proposes a new facility for the existing Lexus dealership. One of the two existing buildings will be replaced with a new building, which consists of a two-level automobile sales space, a 49-bay automobile shop with one-level parking above and below the shop, and a three-level structured parking garage in the rear of the site. The car service portion of the second existing building will be removed and used for surface parking. The plan proposes to expand up to 69,220 square feet for the car dealership and 37,000 square feet of garage parking on 4.7 acres. The existing stormwater management pond will be replaced with underground water quantity and quality facilities.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Prior Approvals

Preliminary Plan

Preliminary Plan 1-82064, Royco's Addition to Derwood, was approved by the Planning Board on July 29, 1982, and was recorded on September 29, 1982. The subject 4.7-acre site is part of the 10.68 acres covered by Preliminary Plan 1-82064. A copy of the Planning Board opinion for Preliminary Plan 1-82064 is attached.

ANALYSIS: Conformance to Development Standards

PROJECT DATA TABLE (I-1 Zone)

Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Proposed
Min. Tract Area (ac.):	--	4.7
Building Area: (sf.)		
Automobile sales		37,300
Existing		6,460
Proposed (2 levels)		30,840
Automobile Shop (49 bays)		<u>31,920</u>
Total		69,220
Min. Building Setbacks (ft.)		
from street	50 ¹	62
rear yard	10	15
side yard	10	10
Max. Building Coverage (%) ¹	35	25.5
Min. Green Area	10% 20,473 s.f.	15.3% 31,512 s.f.
Max. Building Height (ft.):	3 stories 42 feet	3 stories 42 feet
Parking		
Min. Parking Setbacks (ft.)	10	10
Min. Internal Green (%)	5	7.4
Number of Parking Spaces		
Sales (5/1,000 sf)	187	
Employee	<u>52</u>	
Total	239	
surface space		143 ²
garage space		<u>96</u>
total		239
Motorcycle	5	5
Bicycle	12	12
Car storage (space)	--	459

- 1 Per Section 59-C-4.367 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- 2 Including 6 HC spaces

ANALYSIS:

Conformance to Master Plan

The Approved and Adopted (1977) Shady Grove Transit Station Area Plan recommends I-1 (light industrial) zoning for the subject property and other properties bounded by Redland Road and East Gude Drive. Automobile dealerships are permitted in the I-1 (light industrial) zone with site plan review. The proposed landscape plan conforms to the 1977 Plan's guidance.

The 1977 Plan has general and specific urban design recommendations for the planning area and MD 355. Some of the general urban design recommendations are:

- a. Landscaping is one of the elements of urban design most capable of tying together the multitude of projects, of softening their visual and audible impact and of assuring an identifiable character for Shady Grove.
- b. Space-defining trees should be used along roadways to provide overhead canopy and to direct the line of automobile movement. Shade trees should be used in parking lots to relieve the monotony of large, paved masses. Red oak trees are excellent for roadways and sidewalk planting (p.113).
- c. Pedestrian walkways should be surfaced with concrete, brick unit pavers, exposed aggregate, flagstone, or other safe and attractive materials. They should be separated from vehicle traffic by elevation, distance, landscaping or a combination of these methods (p.115).
- d. Specific tree types, sizes, and trees spacing are recommended in the 1977 Sector Plan for MD 355 Corridor (p.123).

▪ Conformance to Current County Standards

Existing County Roadway standards require that street trees be located in a lawn panel between the curb and travel lanes and the sidewalk or bikeway. This standard was established in the mid 1990's to improve pedestrian safety and achieve adequate soil space for the growth of street trees. The proposed streetscape plan does not conform to the current standard because the existing sidewalk is located at the curb of the six-lane highway.

The proposed redevelopment of the site represents an opportunity to rebuild the pedestrian environment along MD 355 in accordance with county standards. The frontage along MD 355 is approximately 390 linear feet, over the length of a football field.

Staff recommends that the site plan be revised to relocate a six-foot sidewalk setback, five feet from the street curb in order to comply with County street standards, and to provide a safe pedestrian walkway from highway traffic. Street trees should be planted within the tree panel adjacent to the curb.

▪ Compliance with Planning Board (2004) Draft Shady Grove Sector Plan

The Planning Board (2004) Shady Grove Sector Plan recommends retaining I-1 zoning. The Plan recognizes that existing businesses will remain in place for some time and that any mixed-use development will be in the future.

The Plan also recommends upgrading the streetscape along the entire MD 355 corridor given the proximity to Metro, need for safer pedestrian access and the importance of MD 355 as a “Main Street” within Montgomery County. In MD 355 South Corridor, the Planning Board Plan endorses a “curbside lawn panel to separate pedestrians from moving traffic” and to “provide a six-foot wide sidewalk at a minimum” (p.77).

Forest Conservation

The proposed development is exempt from forest conservation requirements as a “modification to an existing property” meeting all the conditions for exemption per approved NRI/FSD # 4-04162 dated January 5, 2004.

Site Location and Vehicular Access Point

The site is located on the east side of Frederick Road opposite the Celera Driveway and between Indianola Drive and East/West Gude Drive. The proposed vehicular site access point is at the existing driveway from Frederick Road currently controlled by a traffic signal permitting full-movement access.

Pedestrian Circulation

Sidewalks exist along both sides of this segment of Frederick Road near the site, but there are no sidewalks leading into the site. However, these sidewalks are adjacent to the travel lanes and should be upgraded to County’s standards. The signalized intersection of site access driveway and Frederick Road includes pedestrian signal indicators and push buttons to provide for safer crossing at the intersection. Based on a pedestrian counts collected on October 5, 2004, the number of observed pedestrians crossing at each leg of the intersection are shown below for the total 12-hour and maximum 15-minute time periods:

1. Across the Frederick Road’s north leg: A total of 313 pedestrians crossing with a maximum of up to 15 pedestrians between 1:45 to 2:00 p.m.
2. Across the Frederick Road’s south leg: A total of 525 pedestrians crossing with a maximum of up to 28 pedestrians between 9:45 and 10:00 a.m.
3. Across the Lexus access driveway’s east leg: A total of four pedestrians crossing with a maximum of only one pedestrian at four different time intervals.
4. Across the Celera driveway’s west leg: A total of 18 pedestrians crossing with a maximum of four pedestrians between 4:00 and 4:15 p.m.

Transit service is available with Ride-On routes 46 and 55 and Metrobus route Q-2 operating along the nearby segment of Frederick Road.

Master Plan Roadways and Bikeways

In accordance with the approved and adopted *Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan Amendment III, Shady Grove Study Area* and the Planning Board Draft *Shady Grove Sector Plan*, the nearby roadways and bikeways are designated as follows: