

September 22, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Kronenberg, Planner/Coordinator
Development Review Division

VIA: Shahriar Etemadi, Supervisor
Transportation Planning

FROM: Scott A. James, Planner/Coordinator *Saj*
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: 1200 Blair Mill Road Condominiums
Preliminary Plan #1-06006 and Project Plan #9-06001
Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) review of the preliminary and project plans application for 96 dwelling units at 1200 Blair Mill Road.

RECOMMENDATION

Transportation Planning staff recommends approval of the above referenced preliminary and site plans with the following conditions as part of the APF test for transportation requirements related to Local Area Transportation Review (LATR):

1. Limit the development to 96 residential units.
2. Dedicate and show on the record plat right-of-way on Blair Mill Road as to equal 63 feet when measured from the opposite property line.
3. Dedicate and show on the record plat, ten feet of right-of-way on Newell Road so as to equal 52 feet of right-of-way when measured from the opposite property line.
4. Participate in the Silver Spring Transportation Management District.

DISCUSSION

Site Location, Access, Circulation, and Parking

The subject property is a roughly triangular parcel located at the southwestern corner of the intersection of East-West Highway, Blair Mill Road and Newell Street. Blair Mill Road borders the subject property on its northern side and Newell Road to the south. East-West Highway borders the property on its eastern portion. Acorn Park is located to the south and east of the subject property along Newell Street.

Local Area Transportation Review

The proposed development of 96 residential units is not anticipated to generate more than 30 peak hour trips and therefore is not required to provide a formal traffic study per the LATR Guidelines. A traffic statement complying with LATR Guidelines was submitted and accepted for this project proposal.

Master Plan Roadways and Bikeways

East-West Highway is classified as a major highway with four travel lanes and an ultimate right-of-way width of 90 feet between Blair Mill Road and Georgia Avenue. Newell Street is classified as a primary residential street of ultimate right-of-way of 70 feet per the Silver Spring (Central Business District) Sector Plan. Blair Mill Road is classified as a Business Street of ultimate right-of-way of 70 feet per the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan.

An off-road shared-use bikeway is planned for East-West Highway (Bikeway #5, also referred to as SP- 9) for the length of the development frontage. An on-road shared outside lane bicycle facility is planned for Blair Mill Road (Bikeway #14). Both bicycle facilities are shown in the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan.

Right-of-Way Dedications

The subject property forms a triangular parcel on the western side of the Newell Street/Blair Mill Road/East-West Highway intersection. Previous developments in this location have altered the agreed upon ultimate right-of-way dimensions for Blair Mill Road and Newell Street. A prior proposed development located at 1200 East-West Highway and approved on June 30, 2005, established an ultimate right-of-way for Blair Mill Road equal to 63 feet.¹ Consequently, the subject proposal is not required to meet the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan suggested ultimate right-of-way width of 70 feet for this roadway.

Along Newell Street, a previously approved development (8-94030A) for Lot 4, Parcel A, Block C of Silver Spring included the petition to abandon a section of Newell Street in order to expand Acorn Park. This abandonment was incorporated into the Caldor/Discovery Creative and Technical Center proposal resulting in a reduced right-of-way of 42 feet at the time of

¹ See Planning Board Opinion for Preliminary Plan #1-05084, development proposal for 1200 East-West Highway.

approval² on June 24, 1999. The applicant proposes to dedicate ten feet of right-of-way for a total of 52 feet for this section of Newell Street. The abandonment and revised dimensions for the Newell Street right-of-way were not included in the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan. Memoranda from Park and Planning Department files indicate that the reduced right-of-way for Newell Street was agreed upon at the Planning Board meeting to approval Site Plan #8-94001. The staff memorandum continues to state:

“The master plan recommends a 70-foot right-of-way width of Newell Street, but it is currently 60 feet. The additional 10 feet would come from property on the north side of the road, between Newell Street (the westbound section) and Blair Mill Road.... MCDOT has recommended that the westbound pavement on Newell Street be widened to a minimum of 33 feet within the existing right-of-way, plus retaining sidewalk. ... While some minimal expansion into the park may be acceptable, there is a critical location where the intrusion would not be acceptable for project plan approval. This is the location where staff report for the project plan identifies some mature trees in the park.³

After approval of the Caldor proposal, the abandonment of Newell Street created an existing right-of-way of 42 feet. An additional ten feet as proposed by the applicant would not result in standard roadway cross section, however, seeking more right-of-way to the east would compromise the integrity of Acorn Park. If additional right-of-way beyond ten feet were sought from the subject property the geometric configuration of the adjacent intersection of East-West Highway/Blair Mill Road and Newell Street would become problematic. Therefore, staff proposes that the applicant dedicate ten feet of right-of-way preserving the non-standard roadway cross section for this segment of Newell Street and the existing geometry of the adjacent intersection. The additional ten feet of right-of-way will adequately provide for standard streetscape amenities along the frontage of the development property.

Pedestrian Access

The adjacent intersection has signalized pedestrian crosswalks on all approaches. Access to and through the intersection is adequate for pedestrians. The proposed pedestrian facilities along the frontage of the property connect to a comprehensive network of pedestrian facility in the Silver Spring CBD area that is safe and adequate. No additional improvements for pedestrian access are anticipated as a result of this project proposal.

SJ:gw

Rev mmo to Kronenberg re 1200 Blair Mill

² See Planning Board Opinion of plan application #8-94030A, Caldor/Discovery Creative and Technical Center

³ Excerpted from page 4 of the Transportation Planning staff memorandum discussing Preliminary Plan #1-94057, Caldor Department Store project proposal. Dated April 6, 1994.




September 21, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: ✓ Robert Kronenberg, RLA, Planner Coordinator
Development Review Division

Catherine Conlon, Supervisor
Development Review Division

VIA: Glenn Kreger, Team Leader, Silver Spring/Takoma Park Team
Community-Based Planning Division

FROM: Miguel Iraola, ASLA, Planner Coordinator 
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: Project Plan Review No. 9-06001
Preliminary Plan Review No. 1-06006
1200 Blair Mill Road

The Community-Based Planning staff has reviewed the above referenced Preliminary Plan and Project Plan for conformance with the Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan (Approved February 2000). The subject property is located at the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Blair Mill Road and Newell Street in South Silver Spring. Community-Based Planning recommends the approval of this Project Plan and Preliminary Plan, with the following conditions needed to ensure consistency with the approved CBD Sector Plan:

1. Dedicate additional street right-of-way along the Newell Street frontage equal to a final width of 52 feet.
2. Provide a Class III bikeway (on-road, signed shared bikeway) along both sides of Blair Mill Road.
3. Provide full width streetscape improvements on Newell Street (Type "B") and Blair Mill Road (Type "B") in accordance with the *Silver Spring Streetscape* (April 1992) technical manual or as amended, along the entire site frontage.
4. Insure conformance with the Maryland State Highway Administration approved changes to pedestrian crosswalks, curb ramps and other approved street improvements near the intersection with East-West Highway.

ZONING AND LAND USE:

The 20,097 square foot (33,747 square foot gross tract area for determining density) subject property is zoned CBD-1 (Central Business District, 1.0). The approved CBD Sector Plan recommends the CBD-1 zoning for this site which was applied through the Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) adopted July 18, 2000, per County Council Resolution 14-600.

Residential development is permitted under the CBD-1 Zone. The project proposes 96 residential units, which reflects the maximum density (125 du/ac) permitted by the zone under the Optional Method. The proposed development equates to 132,065 GSF (gross square feet) with a 3.9 FAR.

The minimum required public use space for this project is 3,554 square feet (20 percent of the net lot). The applicant is proposing 4,387 square feet of on-site public use space and amenities which equals 24.7 percent of the net lot. The applicant also proposes an additional 4,235 square feet of off-site streetscape improvements. In total, the applicant proposes 8,622 square feet of on-site public use space, amenities and off-site improvements or 48.5 percent of the net lot area.

SECTOR PLAN CONFORMANCE:

The Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan, approved by the County Council on February 1, 2000, outlines six themes which articulate the shared goals and vision for a revitalized Silver Spring. Three of these themes (i.e., a residential downtown; a green downtown; and a pedestrian-friendly downtown) apply to this proposed project. The Sector Plan does not specifically identify the proposed project site as a potential housing site. However, the Sector Plan does encourage housing as an important component of the revitalization efforts. 12.5 percent of the units will be moderately-priced (MPDU).

This project is being developed under the optional method of development and proposes new opportunities for landscaped public open spaces, public art and streetscapes. This project encourages the development of active urban streets by providing the main building entrance along Blair Mill Road. Placing the primary public space in a prominent place as an activity generator further activates the street. This proposal improves the quality of the pedestrian environment by providing the streetscape treatment required for optional method projects.

- A. **Compatibility:** The proposed residential development is adjacent to the Spring Garden apartment building to the west. The Silver Spring Square (The Silverton) condominium building (height 60 feet), the Bennington apartment building (height 143 feet) and the approved Silver Spring Gateway project (height 143 feet) are located across East-West Highway from the proposed development. The recently approved 1200 East-West Highway project (height 143 feet) is located across Blair

Mill Road. The Discovery Communications Creative Technology Center (height 60 feet) is located across Newell Street on East-West Highway. The proposed building height is 90 feet.

The Sector Plan suggests height and setback limitations for buildings along Newell Street and Eastern Avenue to ensure *compatibility* with adjacent residential neighborhoods (Plan, p. 86). This recommendation was later codified as part of the Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone. This property is outside the overlay zone. Community Based Planning staff feels that the proposed 90' building height is compatible with the existing and proposed residential buildings adjacent to the proposed development and therefore satisfies the intent of the Sector Plan. Staff feels that the proposed development meets the intent of the Sector Plan in terms of compatibility and will not adversely affect surrounding properties.

- B. Sector Plan Street Rights-of-Way:** The Sector Plan recommends a street right-of-way of 70 feet for Newell Street. The existing right-of-way of 42 feet was reduced from 60 feet as part of an abandonment and subsequent parcel creation for Acorn Park in 1994. Staff at that time, agreed that an additional 10 feet of street right-of-way dedication would be required for the north side of Newell Street in the future. Therefore, staff recommends the applicant dedicate additional street right-of-way to equal a final width of 52 feet.

Blair Mill Road has an existing 60-foot street right-of-way and is symmetrical (street centered). The Sector Plan recommends a street right-of-way of 70 feet for Blair Mill Road. The right-of-way for Blair Mill Road was established at 63 feet during the Preliminary Plan Review (No. 1-05084) of the 1200 East-West Highway project and therefore no additional street dedication is required for this proposal.

- C. Sector Plan Bikeways:** The Sector Plan recommends a Class II or III bikeway (on-road, bike lanes or signed shared roadway) on Blair Mill Road. We recommend a Class III bikeway (on-road, signed shared bikeway) along Blair Mill Road.
- D. Streetscape:** The Blair Mill Road and Newell Street frontages will be improved with the Type "B" Silver Spring streetscape treatment. The streetscape public amenities for the proposed project should be in accordance with the standards of the *Silver Spring Streetscape* technical manual or as modified.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

The applicant has met with two community and civic groups including the Urban District Advisory Board and the Commercial and Economic Development subcommittee of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board. The applicant has contacted the Shepherd Park Citizens Association, the Gateway Coalition and the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of

Commerce for comments regarding this proposal. Staff has not received written or verbal comments from the public regarding this proposal.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOUTH SILVER SPRING PATHWAYS PLAN:

The Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs has prepared a conceptual Pedestrian Pathways Plan for South Silver Spring. There are no proposed pathways planned near the subject property.

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