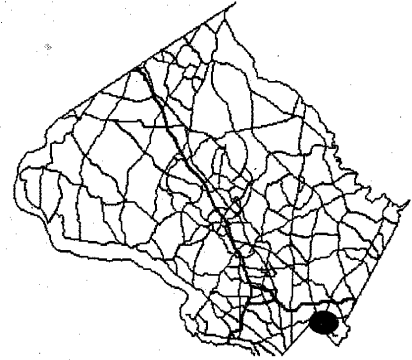


MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 21, 2006
 TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
 Rose Krasnow, Chief *RK*
 Robert A. Kronenberg, Acting
 Supervisor *RAK*
 Development Review Division
 FROM: Linda Komes, RLA, AICP *LK*
 (On behalf of Development Review
 Division)
 (301) 650-2860



REVIEW TYPE: **Site Plan Review**
 CASE #: **820060080**
 PROJECT NAME: **Long Branch Medical Building**
 APPLYING FOR: Approval of 55,800 sf of Medical Office space on 0.91 acres
 REVIEW BASIS: Div. 59-D-3 of Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance

ZONE: C-1 and Takoma Park/East Silver Spring Commercial Revitalization
 Overlay Zone (CROZ)

LOCATION: Southeast quadrant of the intersection of Flower Avenue and Arliss Street
 in the Long Branch Village Center

MASTER PLAN: East Silver Spring
 APPLICANT: Flower Avenue Shopping Center, LLP
 CO-APPLICANT: Adventist Healthcare, Inc.
 FILING DATE: August 18, 2005
 HEARING DATE: March 09, 2006

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Site Plan 820060080 for 55,800 sf of medical office space on 0.91 acres. All site development elements as shown on the Long Branch Medical building stamped by the M-NCPPC on February 15, 2006 shall be required except as modified by the following conditions:

1. Preliminary Plan Conformance
 The proposed development shall comply with the conditions of approval for Preliminary Plan 1-06024 reviewed concurrently with the subject site plan.

2. Building Height

The building shall be built in strict conformance with Site Plan 8-06008 and shall be no more than 40 feet in height measured from the top of the curb at the midpoint of the site frontage facing Arliss Street to the high point of the flat roof as depicted on Sheet A.04 of the Shalom Baranes Assoc. plans dated 2/16/06.

3. Architecture

The building shall be constructed in substantial conformance with the architectural plans and elevations prepared by Shalom Baranes Associates, as revised and dated 2/14/06 and 2/16/06 and as subsequently amended to include additional architectural details to establish a sympathetic relationship with the nearby Flower Theatre.

4. Transportation Division Memo

Conditions of M-NCPPC Transportation Planning Division memo dated February 16, 2006, attached in Appendix A.

5. Signature Set

Prior to signature set approval of site and landscape/lighting plans the following revisions shall be included and/or information provided, subject to staff review and approval:

- a. Provide a designated pedestrian route from the parking garage to Flower Avenue and the surrounding retail area. The Pedestrian route shall be separated from vehicular travelways and will provide a safe pedestrian route from the underground parking garage to the businesses along Flower Ave.
- b. The top of building elevation, and all building and yard setbacks from the Development Data table shall be clearly shown on the site plan.
- c. Provide construction details for the enlargement of the existing tree pits along Flower Avenue and a detail of the tree pit, including an amended soil panel, and ground cover planting.
- d. Provide the streetscape treatment along Arliss Street as proposed by the Department Of Housing and Community Affairs and as approved by the Department of Public Works and Transportation.
- e. Demonstrate that the driveway aprons will be constructed using exposed aggregate concrete for a continuous treatment within the Flower Avenue and Arliss Street right-of-ways.
- f. Add another shade tree 30 feet on center north of the last proposed shade tree along Flower Avenue.
- g. Replace the Zelkovas along Flower Avenue with a flowering tree.
- h. Provide construction details for retaining walls, special pavement areas, signage, lighting, railings, bike racks, etc. All facades of retaining walls above grade shall be brick clad.
- i. Provide the proposed spacing for all shrubs in the plant list.
- j. Demonstrate that all light fixtures shall be full cut-off fixtures or shall be able to be equipped with deflectors, refractors or reflectors, on all fixtures causing potential glare or excess illumination, specifically on the perimeter fixtures abutting the adjacent residential property.
- k. Locate required bicycle and motorcycle parking on the plans
- l. Provide the internal green area calculations on the site plan and show that the minimum requirements of one shade tree for every 350 sf feet of internal green area has been provided.

- m. Ensure that all trees planted over structure will have enough soil volume to encourage growth and maintain the health of the trees.
 - n. Add special paving, such as stamped concrete, to the island in the parking lot and at the building's entrance from the parking lot.
6. Signage
All illuminated signage, shall be backlit and located as shown on the approved site plan. Details of the signage shall be added to the signature set. The pedestrian route from the underground parking structure to Flower Avenue shall be clearly signed.
 7. Public Parking
The parking garage will have an attendant, and will be available to the public in the following manner: Weekdays: 6 p.m.-11 p.m.; Saturdays from 10 a.m. - 11 p.m.; Sunday 7:30 a.m.- 6 p.m.
 8. Building Glare
Mecho shades will be used on all building windows along Flower Avenue and Arliss Street.
 9. Forest Conservation
The property is exempt from the Forest Conservation requirements by letter dated June 24, 2005 (Appendix A).
 10. Stormwater Management
The proposed development is subject to Stormwater Management Concept approval conditions dated September 8, 2005 [Appendix A].
 11. Development Program
Applicant shall construct the proposed development in accordance with the Development Program. A Development Program shall be reviewed and approved by M-NCPPC staff prior to approval of signature set of site plan. The Development Program shall include a phasing schedule as follows:
 - a. All elements of the site plan, except for the street trees and streetscape treatment, shall be completed prior to issuance of the occupancy permit. Applicant shall provide the use and occupancy permit to M-NCPPC staff in order to inspect the site for streetscape, including the street trees, streetlights and pavers, as well as on-site landscaping, lighting, and paver materials.
 - b. Street tree planting for Flower Avenue and Arliss Street shall progress as site construction is completed, but no later than six months after completion of the building.
 - c. Clearing and grading shall correspond to the construction phasing, to minimize soil erosion.
 - d. Phasing of dedications, stormwater management, sediment/erosion control, pedestrian paths, trip mitigation or other features.
 12. Clearing and Grading
No clearing, grading, or demolition prior to M-NCPPC approval of signature set of plans.

SITE PLAN REVIEW ISSUES

Building compatibility with adjacent properties

The subject site is located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Flower Avenue and Arliss Street on the edge of the Long Branch Village Center. The site lies within the East Silver Spring Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone. The underlying zone is C-1. The Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone allows the Planning Board to approve building heights up to 42 feet with a finding of neighborhood compatibility and consistency with the intent of the master plan.

The site is currently developed as a surface parking lot containing approximately 68 parking spaces. Confronting properties across Flower Avenue are zoned R-60 and are developed with two-story, single-family detached homes. The height of these homes measured to the peak of each roof varies from 24'-28'. Confronting property across Arliss Street is developed with a two-story, single-family detached home, approximately 22 feet-tall to the peak of its roof. The front of the house faces Flower Avenue and its side façade faces the proposed office building. The side and rear yard of this home is completely enclosed with a solid board fence. Further east along Arliss Street is a row of eight, two-story townhouses, zoned R-T 12.5.

Both Flower Avenue and Arliss Street have 70-foot-wide road right-of-ways. The distance between between the proposed office building façade and the confronting residences along Flower Avenue and Arliss Street is approximately 115 feet.

The applicant proposes to construct a three story, forty-foot-tall, medical office building. A penthouse structure enclosing mechanical units is located on the roof of the building setback from the face of the building. The building has been sited on the lot to align with the edge of the existing commercial buildings along Flower Avenue providing a strong relationship to Flower Avenue and Arliss Street. Parking, consisting of approximately 190 total parking spaces, is located primarily below the building in a parking garage, with 24 parking spaces located behind the building in a small surface parking lot.

In response to community concerns, a number of revisions have been made to the plans. The gross floor area of the building, now proposed at 55,800 square feet, has been reduced from the original submission of 57,900 square feet. The building height has also been reduced from 42 feet to 40 feet, and the building façade materials have been modified so that approximately 80% of the façade will be clad in brick or will be comprised of punched windows, and the remaining 20% of the façade will be a glass curtain wall. The building setback along Flower Avenue has been increased and both the Flower Avenue and Arliss Street frontages will include an improved streetscape and a garden area at the base of the building.

Community Position

Staff has received letters opposing as well as supporting the proposed medical office building. These letters are attached in Appendix B of this report. The Sligo Branview community is in opposition to the proposal, finding its height and bulk incompatible with the surrounding residential community. They are also concerned that the proposed building will displace existing parking that is necessary to support the adjacent commercial uses and that not enough parking is

being provided to support both the medical office building and the adjacent commercial uses. They have also expressed concerns over the proposed hours that Urgent Care services will be provided.

Letters of support received at the time of this writing include a letter from a neighbor supporting the use and several letters from nearby commercial property owners.

Staff Position

Staff believes that the proposal as amended is compatible with the abutting residential neighborhood. The site is currently an under utilized surface parking lot. The proposed three-story office building is separated from the residential neighborhood by roadways which themselves provide a transition between the commercial and residential uses. This type of condition is extremely common and occurs at the edge between nearly every commercial and residential zone. The proposal has been amended to slightly lower the height of the building and additional changes were made in building materials and architectural articulation of the façade to form a more compatible relationship with the nearby residential neighborhood. As amended by the conditions, which require the building to include architectural elements and/or details to foster a sympathetic architectural relationship between the office building and the nearby commercial development, combined with the proposed building setbacks and landscape treatment, the new medical office building will be compatible with both its residential and commercial neighbors.

Sufficient parking will be provided on the site in a surface lot and in an underground garage to support the proposed development. Fifty-six parking spaces over the zoning code requirement will be provided. The new parking facility will be available for use by the community during off-peak hours for the medical office building.

Staff believes that the proposed development is compatible with the adjoining commercial and nearby residential uses and is consistent with the intent of the Master Plan. The following is from the Community Based Planning Division memo, (see Kreger to Komes/Weaver, dated 2/16/06, attached in Appendix A): “We believe that this project is critical to the future revitalization of Long Branch as envisioned in the Master Plan and in subsequent reports by such groups as the Long Branch task force. The proposed project will foster economic vitality in the area by creating jobs, providing customers for other local businesses, and providing parking that can be used by the community during evenings and weekends. It will provide important medical services to the community and help to activate the streets, thereby contributing to public safety. The investment in new Class A space will encourage other redevelopment in the area consistent with the vision identified for Long Branch by a technical panel from the Urban Land Institute”.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Site Vicinity

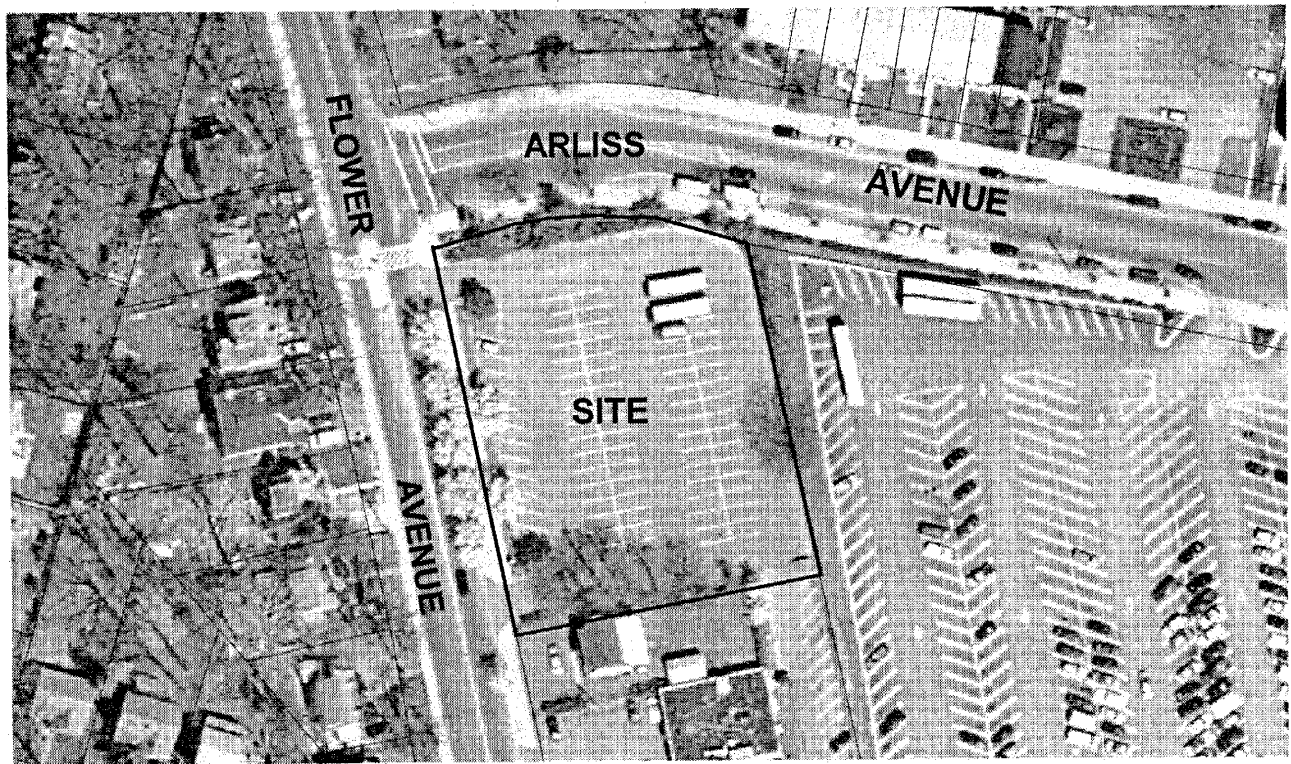
The proposed development is located on the northwestern edge of the commercial core of Long Branch Village Center in East Silver Spring. Flower Avenue (MD 195), a State highway with a 70-foot wide right-of-way forms the western boundary of the subject site. Confronting properties across Flower Avenue consist of two-story, single-family detached homes in the R-60 zone. Arliss Street, classified as a business street with a 70-foot wide right-of-way forms the northern boundary of the site. Confronting property to the north across Arliss Street consists of one, two-story single-family detached home which faces Flower Avenue and further east a row of eight townhomes in the R-T 12.5 zone. Adjacent property to the east is developed with a Giant grocery store and large surface parking lot. Directly south of the site is an existing two-story, single-family detached building (zoned C-1) that houses a dental appliance business. Further south is El Gavilan restaurant, the former Flower Theatre (now occupied by a church) and various retailers in the Flower Village Center, including a County liquor store.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Site Description

The site, located at 8809 Flower Avenue, is currently being used as a surface parking facility. There are no permanent structures on the property. The property has direct frontage on Flower Avenue and Arliss Street. A streetscape treatment was installed during the 1980's and consists of a now incomplete double row of mature Bradford Pear trees, planted approximately 30-feet on center in tree pits located in a 15-foot wide exposed aggregate concrete sidewalk. Pedestrian-scale, decorative street lighting exists along both the Flower Avenue and Arliss Street frontages. An existing row of Honey Locust Trees in tree pits 40'-50' on center, are located along the Arliss Street frontage. The existing sidewalk is concrete. Overhead utility lines also exist along the Arliss Street frontage. A lone electric pole exists near the existing driveway entrance off of Flower Avenue. Access to the existing parking lot is provided via two driveways on Flower Avenue and a connection behind the adjacent commercial uses to the south.

The topography on the property slopes from north to south by approximately 8 feet. The high point of the site is at the northwest corner of the site adjacent to the intersection of Flower Avenue and Arliss Street. There is no significant vegetation on the property with the exception of a large shade tree along the common property line with the grocery store. Several volunteer Tulip Poplars and Oaks are growing along the property line to the south and a row of Japanese pine trees parallel the Arliss Street frontage under the overhead lines.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Proposal

The proposal requests approval of a 55,800 square foot (sf) medical office building. The building will include the following medical uses: 5,000 sf Urgent Care Center, approximately 25,000 sf of medical offices, 5,000 sf Surgery Center, 5,000 sf Imaging Center, 10,000 sf primary/specialty care clinic. The remaining space will be “back of the house” support space. The proposal also includes 190 parking spaces located primarily in an underground parking garage.

Building Design

The L-shaped, three-story building will be 40 feet in height and located on the site to align with the face of the Flower Theatre located just down the block. This strategy is a departure from the typical 'box' office prototype with parking located in front of the building along the street and helps scale the building to its surrounding context. The two wings of the 'L' have been 'slipped' in relation to each other to announce the main building entry at the corner of Arliss Street and Flower Avenue. The positioning of the building along the street helps define the pedestrian zone along the street frontage and locates surface parking and loading areas behind the building out of direct view.

The building skin design avoids the use of ribbon windows, as seen on many contemporary office buildings, in favor of a 'punched' window vocabulary more in keeping with the residential neighborhood scale. This simple window pattern is relieved by more dramatic openings of glass windows in the exterior walls at the corners and near the entry to add an additional layer of detail to the façade fenestration, visually breaking down the façade into two and three-story components.



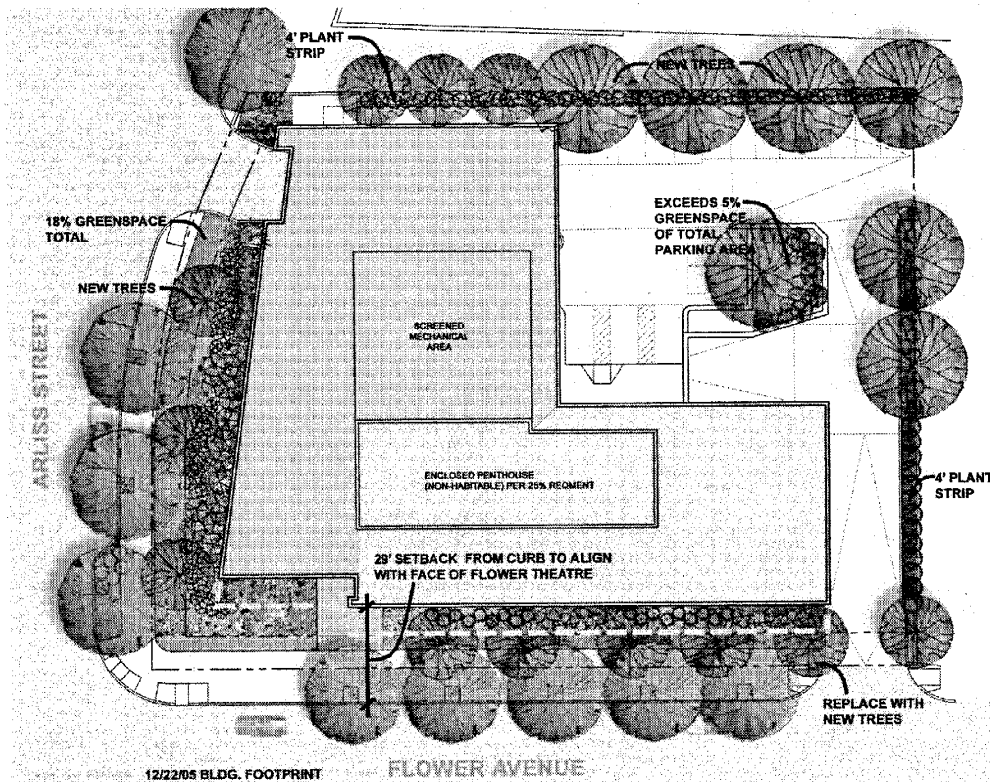
The proposed building materials are derived both from the Flower Theater building, (which is the neighborhood landmark), and nearby residential buildings, many of which are brick. The brick color will be a buff/grey, which is sympathetic yet deferential to the brick of the Flower Theater.

Vehicular Access/Parking

Vehicular access to the site and the underground parking garage is provided via three entrances. Ingress/egress will be provided off of Flower Avenue near the southern property line, and from Arliss Street near the eastern property line. Ingress only will be provided via the existing access drive from the surface parking lot located to the south of the property.

A total of 190 parking spaces are proposed. A small surface parking lot, located behind the building, will include 24 parking spaces, including three handicap accessible parking spaces. The surface parking lot will be partially covered by the upper floors of the northern wing of the building. The applicant has stated that the public will be permitted to park in these surface parking spaces as well as in the parking garage during non-peak hours for the medical building. Access to the parking garage will be via a ramp located behind the southern wing of the building. Three levels of underground parking will accommodate the remaining 166 parking spaces.

Spaces for motorcycle parking and bike lockers and bicycle racks are also being provided. As amended by the conditions above, the driveway aprons will also be constructed using exposed aggregate concrete for a continuous treatment within the Flower Avenue and Arliss Street right-of-ways to visually accentuate the pedestrian friendly streetscape treatment.



Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access to the medical office building will be provided from the main entrance off of Flower Avenue as well as from the rear of the building off of the surface parking lot and from the underground parking garage via an elevator and by access stairs. Pedestrian access to Flower Avenue from the parking

garage will be provided from the P-1 parking level, up a short flight of stairs through a door exiting onto Flower Avenue in the southwest corner of the building. Patrons parking in the underground garage will also be able to exit the garage on foot by using a stairwell and exiting the building at the ground floor level via an egress door near the surface parking lot.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Prior Approvals

A Preliminary Plan of subdivision (1-06024) is being reviewed concurrently with the subject site plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Community Outreach

The Applicant and representatives from Adventist Hospital have met with various members of the community on a number of occasions beginning in October 2005 and most recently on January 21, 2006. These meetings were with the Sligo Branview Community Association, the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board, members from the Long Branch Task Force and the Long Branch Business League. Attached in Appendix C is a memo from Greg Fernebok of Sheridan Development with the dates and a summary of the issues raised during these meetings. See Fernebok to Silber, dated 2/6/06.

ANALYSIS: Conformance to Development Standards

PROJECT DATA TABLE (C-1 and CROZ)

<u>Development Standard</u>	<u>Permitted/Required</u>		<u>Binding</u>
	<u>C-1 Zone</u>	<u>CROZ</u>	<u>8-06006</u>
<u>Lot Area</u>			
Tract Area	15 acres max		0.91 ac. (39,657 sf)
Gross Lot Area (ac)	N/A	N/A	0.91 ac. (39,657 sf)
Public Dedication: Flower Avenue			
Public Dedication: Intersection Truncation			0.007 ac. (312.49 sf)
Net Lot Area	N/A	N/A	0.90 ac. (39,344.51 sf)
<u>Density</u>			
Building Area (building sf)	N/A	N/A	55,800 sf
Building Coverage (footprint)			18,600 sf
<u>Green Area</u>			
Green Space %	10% [3,996 sf]		18% [7,143 sf]
Internal Parking lot Green Space	5% (362 sf)		11% (776 sf)
Impervious Area	N/A	N/A	82% [32,514 sf]
<u>Building Height C-1 Zone [59-C-4.42]</u>	30 feet avg;	30 feet ¹	40 feet
<u>Building Setbacks (linear feet)</u>			
Street Front [Master Plan ROW]			
From Flower Avenue, Master Plan	10 feet min		18'-6"
Arless Street, Master Plan	10 feet min		Varies, min. 11'-0"
Other Lot Lines:			
Setback	Not required		
Yard Dimensions (east)	10' min		10'-0"
Yard Dimensions (south)	10' min.		25'-0"
<u>Parking</u>			
Medical office/clinic 2.4 spaces/1,000 sf	134		190
-Surface parking - 24 spaces			
-Garage Level 1 - 57 spaces			
-Garage Level 2 - 57 spaces			
-Garage Level 3 - 42 spaces			
Required bicycle/motorcycle spaces	10/4		12/4

1. §59-C-18.213(c) The Planning Board may allow additional building height up to 42 feet in commercial development if the Board finds that the buildings are compatible with the neighborhood and consistent with the intent of the master plan. Building compatibility is addressed on pg. 4 "Building Compatibility with Adjacent Properties" and in the Findings for Compatibility on pg.15.

ANALYSIS: Conformance to Master Plan

The *Approved and Adopted December 2000 East Silver Spring Master Plan* rezoned the subject property from the R-60 zone to C-1/CROZ, and rezoned the rest of the block from C-2 to C-1/CROZ. In doing so, the County Council created the commercial core of Long Branch with uniform commercial zoning, and incorporated the subject site into the commercial core. It also established Arliss Street as the transition between the commercial retail activity of the Flower Village Center and the residential community to the north. .

As part of the rezoning, the Master Plan also provided recommendations to ensure that new development within the Commercial Revitalization Overlay Zone would be compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood. Among these recommendations, that are found on pages 39-41 of the Master Plan, is a requirement for site plan review. The Master Plan states that new buildings on the site “should be compatible with the adjoining residential neighborhood in terms of height, bulk, building materials, setbacks, and landscaping”. The Master Plan goes on to provide specific guidance to achieve compatibility including recommendations for the location of building entrances, orientation to the street, vehicular circulation and parking, lighting, and signage. It mentions that townhouse development would be appropriate for the subject site, but it in no way restrict s the site to that type of development.

The Master Plan also recommends that the Arliss Street streetscape be improved as a “transition area between the townhouses on the north side of the street and the commercial retail activity of the Flower Village Center” (pg. 76). The DHCA has recently developed streetscape standards for Arliss Street that are currently under review by the DPW&T. A condition has been included in this report which requires that the Applicant improve the Arliss Street streetscape using the standards as approved by DPW&T. The Master Plan also recommends that improvements be made to the Flower Avenue streetscape. The Applicant has agreed to replace the more than 30-year old Bradford Pears with a long lived street tree, and increase the size and improve the soil within the existing tree pits along Flower Avenue.

Upon review of the proposal, staff finds that the new office building achieves the purposes and meets the recommendations of the Master Plan. A memorandum from the Community Based Planning Division is attached in Appendix A and further elaborates on the how the proposal conforms with the Master Plan as well as with other relevant public policy including the Enterprise Zone, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) report, the Long Branch Task Force, *Planning Framework Report: Revitalizing Centers, Reshaping Boulevards, and creating Great Public Spaces*, and the Bi-County Transitway.