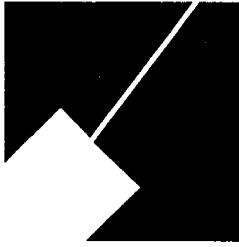


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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

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December 12, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Elsabett Tesfaye, Zoning Analyst  
Development Review Division

FROM: Khalid Afzal, Georgia Avenue Team Leader, *KA*  
Community-Based Planning Division

SUBJECT: Master Plan Comments  
Development Plan Amendment, DPA 05-02  
2907 West University Boulevard

---

The proposed project is located at the northeast corner of University Boulevard and Valleyview Avenue. It is within the 1990 *Sector Plan for Wheaton Central Business District and Vicinity*, which has general and specific recommendations and comments for the area on the north side of University Boulevard between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue. Community-Based Planning staff believes that the proposed amendment is not consistent with the goals and objectives of the Sector Plan.

One of the Plan's general goals is to "preserve and protect the existing residential communities adjoining to the Wheaton business area." (Page 2, PLAN SUMMARY.) Also, on page 4, INTRODUCTION, one of the recommendations is that "new development be channeled to preserve and protect existing communities from adverse impacts and undesirable non-residential intrusion resulting from commercial growth, the placement and operation of Metro related facilities, and other public and private land use decisions."

The more specific comments and recommendations are contained in LAND USE AND ZONING Chapter under Office Land Use on page 33. The Plan states: "In addition to new office development within the Metro Center, office development is recommended north of Blueridge Avenue, on the northern frontage of University Boulevard between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue, and on the east side of Amherst Avenue south of University Boulevard."

It further states: "The Plan indicates office use for the University Boulevard frontage between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue. The remaining residential structures front on a major artery with associated traffic noise and air pollution. The residential sensitivity of these problems is indicated by the deterioration of a number of the homes. The conversion of these houses to offices would tend to stabilize this frontage area and

provide a buffer to the existing single-family community to the north. Future development should be similar in scale to the existing conversions that have taken place in the block between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue. This type of development is also recommended on Amherst Drive adjacent to the Central Business District."

The Plan also refers to this area under the Residential Land Use section on page 35. It states: "The single-family areas to the north and west of the Central Business District are stable residential areas which have shown some signs of deterioration due, in part, to speculation about commercial rezoning. It is recommended that the existing single-family character of these areas be reaffirmed."

On page 46, the Plan has specific recommendations regarding C-T zoning along the university Boulevard frontage at this location. The proposed Zoning Plan recommends "C-T zoning (low-intensity office development) for the northern frontage of University Boulevard between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue, and the south frontage of University Boulevard adjacent to Wheaton Plaza on those parcels where this zoning does not currently exist. A number of single-family structures along University Boulevard have already been converted to nonresidential uses. While some of the existing houses are large enough to lend themselves to office conversion, a number of properties would be better developed as new low-intensity office development. New development should be limited to existing lots and should be discouraged on assemblage of more than one lot. Conversion, where appropriate, and low intensity new development are encouraged to buffer existing single-family residences from adverse effects associated with major traffic arteries."

## **ANALYSIS**

It appears that the guiding principal for the Sector Plan's comments and recommendations for the two blocks on the north side of University Boulevard between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue is that of a development pattern that would best provide an appropriate transition between the Wheaton CBD to the east and the adjoining residential community to the west and south along University Boulevard. The Sector Plan's preference is for existing houses to be converted to low-intensity office uses pursuant to C-T zoning. The Plan recognizes that it may not always be feasible to convert existing single-family structures to commercial uses. Where new development is to take place, the Plan recommends that it be similar in character and visual appearance to the current single-family houses along the north side of University Boulevard in the two blocks between East Avenue and Valleyview Avenue. The vision of the Sector Plan for these two blocks can be described as a series of individual structures, new or converted, that would be compatible in scale and intensity with the adjoining residential structures to the north, and therefore serve as an appropriate transition between the more intense CBD and the surrounding residential community. New developments most consistent with the Plan's vision would be those that "mimic" the appearance of residential structures, primarily single-family detached houses or townhouses.

The building form of the proposed development, a drive-thru structure surrounded by parking with minimal buffer along the residential properties in the rear, is not the type of transitional, low-intensity office development recommended for this location in the Sector Plan. The proposed development, even though small in total square footage, will be a single-story commercial structure surrounded by parking and will create a sharp break rather than a transition between residential and commercial uses along this corridor. It would assemble three lots into one, specifically discouraged by the Sector Plan primarily because, staff believes, it would lead to a building form that would be against the idea of a series of structures which are residential in appearance but may contain commercial uses permitted in a C-T Zone.

Based on the guidance in the Sector Plan and the analysis described in this memo, staff believes that the proposed development is not consistent with the goals and recommendations of the 1990 Wheaton CBD Sector Plan.

KA:ha: j:\cbd disc1\afzal\dpa-05-02



December 13, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Elsabett Tesfaye, Planner  
Development Review Division

VIA: Shahriar Etemadi, Supervisor  
Transportation Planning

FROM: Ed Axler, Planner/Coordinator  
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Development Plan Amendment No. DPA-05-2  
Commerce Bank – Kensington View  
Wheaton Central Business District Policy Area

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's adequate public facilities (APF) review of the subject development plan amendment to redevelop Lots 7, 22, and 23 as a commercial bank with drive-through windows. If approved, a preliminary plan of subdivision would be required to combine these three existing lots into one lot.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Transportation Planning staff recommends the following conditions of the APF test for transportation requirements related to the subject development plan amendment:

1. Limit the development plan amendment to replace the three residential buildings with a branch bank of up to 4,100 square feet with up to ~~three~~ <sup>two</sup> drive-through windows and a 24-hour walk-up ATM. ea
2. Remove one of the drive-through lanes to provide for a bypass lane around the stacking/queuing lanes at the drive-through windows.
3. Delineate the vehicular path along the most easterly side of the parking area to a one-way circulation in to access the drive-through lanes so that there are no conflicts with parking maneuvers and to provide additional area for queuing purposes.

4. Dedicate at the time of preliminary plan:
  - a. An additional 0.6 foot of right-of-way for the sector-planned recommended 60-foot from the centerline of University Boulevard (MD 193).
  - b. Right-of-way for a standard 25-foot truncation at the corner of University Boulevard and Valley View Avenue.
5. Provide a four-foot-wide lead-in sidewalk from Valley View Avenue at the access vehicular point.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Site Location

The site is located in the northeast quadrant of University Boulevard and Valley View Avenue opposite Westfield Shoppingtown- Wheaton (i.e., commonly known as Wheaton Plaza).

### Vehicular Access Points

The existing access points serving the three existing buildings are two curb cuts from University Boulevard and one curb cut from Valley View Avenue. These curb cuts would be closed and replaced with two following site access points:

1. An access point from University Boulevard that is restricted to right-turns-in and right-turns-out only because of the raised median along University Boulevard. This access point is set back the maximum distance or approximately 195 feet east of the signalized intersection with Valley View Avenue/Wheaton Plaza access. Westbound traffic along University Boulevard can easily enter and leave the site through this access point.
2. A full-movement access point from Valley View Avenue that is set back the maximum distance of approximately 120 feet to the north of the signalized intersection with University Boulevard. Eastbound traffic along University Boulevard entering this site must turn left onto Valley View Avenue and then turn right into the site from this access point. Leaving the site, these motorists turn left onto Valley View Avenue and then another left turn at University Boulevard to continue traveling eastbound.

### Internal Vehicular Circulation

The drive-through windows are located along the north side of the site and are accessed from one-way queuing lanes to the east of the drive-through windows. The applicant proposes two-way drive aisles on the east, south and west sides of the site to access the on-site parking spaces. The driveway approximately 80 feet to the east of the Valley View Avenue access point is a two-way drive aisle that serves as the westbound exit from the drive-through windows and as the access to the on-site parking spaces. The internal vehicular circulation should be improved as described in Recommendations No. 2 and 3 above for more efficient traffic flow within the site.

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The proposed development plan amendment would upgrade the existing sidewalk along University Boulevard that is now located at the curb. It will be reconstructed to a five-foot-wide sidewalk set back ten feet from the curb. Along the property frontage of Valley View Avenue, a four-foot-wide sidewalk that is set back eight feet from the curb is proposed where there is no sidewalk at this time. A lead-in sidewalk is proposed from University Boulevard, but none from Valley View Avenue (refer to Recommendation No. 5). Pedestrian crosswalks exist across University Boulevard at the signalized intersection with Valley View Avenue/Wheaton Plaza access. No sector-planned bikeways are recommended along this segment of University Boulevard. The pedestrian facilities will be improved with the proposed and recommended improvements.

### Available Transit and Metrorail Service

Ride-On routes 6 and 34 and Metrobus routes L-7 and L-8 operate along this segment of University Boulevard. Transit service is not available on the residential street of Valley View Avenue. The site is located approximately 375 feet northwest of the Wheaton Metrorail Station.

### Montgomery County Master-Planned Roadways and Bikeways

In accordance with the *Comprehensive Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Wheaton Central Business District and Vicinity*, University Boulevard is designated as a major highway, M-19, with a recommended minimum right-of-way width of 120 feet. Right-of-way has been dedicated for 59.4 feet from the centerline of University Boulevard. An additional 0.6 foot of right-of-way would be required at preliminary plan for the sector-planned recommended 60 feet from the centerline of University Boulevard (refer to Recommendation No. 4a). Valley View Avenue is a tertiary residential street with a 50-foot-wide right-of-way that is not listed in the *Sector Plan*.

### Vehicular Access to and from the Local Kensington View Streets

The section of the Kensington View community adjacent to the subject site has access primarily from University Boulevard at three intersections -- West Avenue, Hillsdale Drive, and Valley View Avenue. All three streets terminate at dead ends. The only connection to an adjacent community is via Geiger Avenue from West Avenue. The disadvantages and advantages of each intersection with University Boulevard are as follows:

- At the intersection with West Avenue, only right-turns-in and right-turns-out are permitted for westbound traffic because of the median along University Boulevard that prevents left turn movements by eastbound traffic.
- The intersection with Hillsdale Drive is a full-movement intersection, but is not signalized. Thus, left turns for eastbound traffic can be difficult onto Hillsdale Drive and from Hillsdale Drive to travel eastbound on University Boulevard.

- The intersection with Valley View Avenue is a full-movement intersection and it is signalized. Thus this intersection provides the only access to University Boulevard where motorists can easily turn left into and out of this community.

#### Queuing Analysis on the Southbound Approach of Valley View Avenue at University Boulevard

Because Valley View Avenue is the only access point to turn left into and from the adjacent Kensington View community, a queuing analysis on the southbound approach of Valley View Avenue at University Boulevard was performed. Using the existing traffic, as well as projected traffic from the bank, the queue were calculated as follows:

- During the weekday morning peak hour within the peak period (6:30 to 9:30 a.m.), 17 queuing vehicles were projected that would require a stacking lane of about 35 feet.
- During the weekday evening peak hour within the peak period (4:00 to 7:00 p.m.), 68 queuing vehicles were projected that would require a stacking lane of 102 feet.

The calculated queue lengths are less than the 120-foot distance between the stop line at the southbound intersection approach and the proposed access point from Valley View Avenue. The queue is relatively short during the weekday morning peak hours because the peak hours of the community leaving their homes to travel to work would be between 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., but banks tend not to open until 10 a.m.

#### Site-Generated Vehicular Trips

A 4,100-square-foot drive-in bank would generate 58 total peak-hour trips during the weekday morning peak period and 154 total peak-hour trips during the weekday evening peak period. A traffic study was required to satisfy Local Area Transportation Review because proposed land use generates 30 or more total peak-hour trips during the weekday morning and evening peak hours.

Total trips include new, pass-by, and diverted trips. Pass-by and diverted trips are those whose primary origins and destinations are for purposes other than using this bank. Using data for the percentage of pass-by and diverted trips published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers, the proposed bank with drive-through windows would generate 31 new peak-hour trips during the weekday morning peak period and 82 new peak-hour trips during the evening peak period.

#### Comparison of the Proposed and Existing Land Uses

If the three residential structures on the three lots were used as general office in the CT zone, the site-generated vehicular trips would be as follows:

| Lot No.       | Address                    | Square Foot | Weekday Peak-Hour |         |
|---------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------|
|               |                            |             | Morning           | Evening |
| Part of Lot 7 | 11107 Valley View Avenue   | 1,116       | 1                 | 3       |
| Lot 23        | 2909 West University Blvd. | 1,459       | 2                 | 3       |
| Lot 22        | 2907 West University Blvd. | 1,901       | 3                 | 4       |
| Total         |                            | 4,476       | 6                 | 10      |

The weekday peak-hour trips generated by 4,476-square feet of general office use are much less than the number of trips generated by the proposed bank.

Congestion Levels at nearby Intersections

Based on the results of the traffic study, the table below shows the resulting critical lane volume (CLV) values for the existing, background, and total traffic conditions. The background traffic condition included the existing traffic plus the traffic generated by nearby approved, but unbuilt developments.

| Intersection  | Weekday Peak-Hour | Traffic Condition                           |            |       |
|---|-------------------|---|------------|-------|
|   |                   | Existing                                    | Background | Total |
| University Boulevard & East Avenue-Wheaton Plaza        | Morning           | 539   | 629        | 634   |
|   | Evening           | 623   | 922        | 933   |
| University Boulevard & Valley View Avenue-Wheaton Plaza | Morning           | 404   | 417        | 440   |
|   | Evening           | 746   | 752        | 797   |
| University Boulevard & Hillsdale Drive                  | Morning           | 423   | 436        | 437   |
|   | Evening           | 542   | 548        | 552   |
| University Boulevard & Site Access                      | Morning           | This access point does not currently exist. |            | 409   |
|   | Evening           | This access point does not currently exist. |            | 441   |
| Valley View Avenue & Site Access                        | Morning           | This access point does not currently exist. |            | 22    |
|   | Evening           | This access point does not currently exist. |            | 95    |

For both weekday peak-hours in all traffic conditions, the CLV values do not exceed the congestion/CLV standard of 1,800 for the Wheaton Central Business District Policy Area at the five intersections.

EA:gw

cc: Mary Goodman  
Lindsay Helms  
Jody Kline  
David Paine



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8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760  
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**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: November 9, 2005

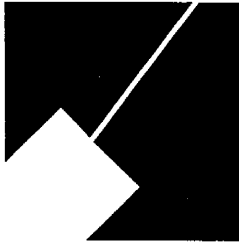
TO: Elisabeth Tesfaye  
Community Based Planning Division

FROM: Taslima Alam *TBA*  
Development Review Division

SUBJECT: Zoning Application No. DPA-05-2

The proposed development requires subdivision. Prior to the release of any building permits the applicant will be required to submit a Preliminary Plan Application pursuant to Chapter 50 of the Subdivision Regulation and a Site Plan application pursuant to Chapter 59D-3 of the zoning ordinance and record a plat in the land records pursuant to Chapter 50 of the Subdivision Regulation.

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**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
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8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760  
301-495-4500, [www.mncppc.org](http://www.mncppc.org)

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: November 14, 2005

TO: Elisabeth Tesfaye, Development Review Division

VIA: Mary Dolan, Countywide Planning Division, Environmental *MD For MD*

FROM: Marion Clark, Countywide Planning Division, Environmental *(m)*

SUBJECT: Development Plan Amendment-05-2  
Commerce Bank Property

**Recommendation**

Environmental Planning staff recommends **approval** of this application.

**Discussion**

This Development Plan Amendment must meet specific findings of Section 59-D-1.61 of the Zoning Ordinance. The required finding for environmental issues states,

*"That by its design, by minimizing grading, and by other means, the proposed development would tend to prevent erosion of the soil and to preserve natural vegetation and other natural features of the site. Any applicable requirements for forest conservation under Chapter 22A and for water resource protection under Chapter 19 must also be satisfied. The District Council may require more detailed findings on these matters by the Planning Board at the time of site plan approval as provided in division 59-D-3."*

This site has flat slopes, no forest, and no specimen trees beyond fair condition. The site is mostly impervious with the exception of small front yards along University Boulevard. There are three single-family houses used commercially with parking lots in the rear and on the east side. This plan proposes to remove the existing houses and replace them with one commercial structure. The proposed plan slightly increases the amount of imperviousness with the construction of the new structure. Stormwater management will likely consist of water quality control measures only due to the small increase in imperviousness.

**Forest Conservation**

A Natural Resource Inventory Forest Stand Delineation has been approved for this site. A Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) exemption has been granted because this is a small property with an activity occurring on a tract less than or equal to 1.5 acres in size where there is no existing forest and afforestation requirements would be less than 10,000 square feet, and no specimen or champion trees will be disturbed. There is one specimen tree in poor condition on this property. A Tree Save Plan is not needed.

### **Environmental Guidelines**

This site is not located within a Special Protection Area or Primary Management Area. There are no streams, floodplains, steep slopes, wetlands or environmental buffers encumbering the site.

### **Stormwater Management**

An approved Stormwater Management Concept for this plan will be required prior to Site Plan approval. Since the increase in runoff generated by the proposed plan will likely be less than that required by DPS for water quantity control, a waiver for water quantity will probably be issued. Structural quality control, however, will be required.

### **Water Quality**

This site is located in the Kensington Heights Branch subwatershed of the Lower Rock Creek watershed. The Lower Rock Creek is a Use I stream suitable for water contact recreation and fishing. The Little Kensington Heights Branch subwatershed has poor stream conditions and fair habitat conditions. The subwatershed is in the Watershed Restoration Area management category designated by the *Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS)*. This designation is applied in older heavily developed areas of the County with long established impacts on the environment. Streams in these areas have been degraded from uncontrolled runoff. After a recent study, the Department of Environmental Protection has prioritized stream restoration projects in Rock Creek.



Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., *Governor*  
Michael S. Steele, *Lt. Governor*

Robert L. Flanagan, *Secretary*  
Neil J. Pedersen, *Administrator*

Maryland Department of Transportation  
October 26, 2005

Ms. Elisabeth Tesfaye  
Community-Based  
Planning Division  
Maryland National Capital  
Park & Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Re: Montgomery County  
MD 193  
Commerce Bank  
File No. DPA-05-2

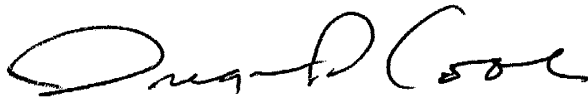
Dear Ms. Tesfaye:

The State Highway Administration (SHA) would like to thank you for the opportunity to review the zoning application (No. DPA-05-2) for the Commerce Bank development. We have completed our review and offer the following comments:

- Access to this property is subject to a permit from SHA for one (1) right-in/right-out commercial entrance along MD 193. The plan also shows access to the County Road, Valley View Avenue, which would require the necessary approvals from Montgomery County.

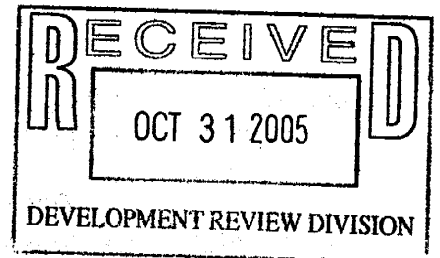
If additional information is required from SHA regarding this project, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Raymond Burns at 410-545-5592, Mr. John Borkowski at 410-545-5595, or by using our toll free number in Maryland only, 1-800-876-4742 (x-5592 for Ray, x-5595 for John). You may also E-mail Ray at [rburns1@sha.state.md.us](mailto:rburns1@sha.state.md.us) or John at [jborkowski@sha.state.md.us](mailto:jborkowski@sha.state.md.us). Thank you for your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

  
Steven D. Foster, Chief  
Engineering Access Permits Division

SDF/RB/JAB

- cc: Mr. Darrell Mobley (Via E-mail)  
Mr. Augustine Rebish (Via E-mail)  
Mr. Richard Weaver, M-NCPPC (Via E-mail)  
Ms. Cathy Conlon, M-NCPPC (Via E-mail)  
Ms. Nancy Randall (Wells & Associates)



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