

Item # 7
MCPB 12/22/05

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 7, 2005
TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: Rose Krasnow, Chief *RK*
Development Review Division
FROM: Marilyn Clemens, Planner/Coordinator *MC*
Community Based Planning
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REVIEW TYPE: Project Plan Review
APPLYING FOR: Approval of 200 multi-family dwelling units,
including 25MPDUs on 1.64 acres

PROJECT NAME: 8400 Wisconsin Avenue
CASE #: 920060060
REVIEW BASIS: Sec. 59-D-2, M.C. Zoning Ordinance
ZONE: CBD-1
LOCATION: Northwestern quadrant of the intersection of Wisconsin
Avenue and Battery Lane, Bethesda CBD
MASTER PLAN: 1994 Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD
APPLICANT: Crimson 8400 Bethesda LLC
FILING DATE: October 3, 2005
HEARING DATE: December 22, 2005

Attached is the staff report for the proposed 8400 Wisconsin Avenue Project Plan. The Planning Board public hearing for this application is scheduled for December 22, 2005. A draft Planning board report for the Project Plan will be available on December 8, 2005. The Staff recommends **Approval** with conditions as described in the staff report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
SUMMARY	3
STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS	4
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	
Surrounding Vicinity	6
Site Description.....	7
Proposed Development.....	8
Illustrations.....	9-12
PLANNING AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK	15
Master Plan.....	15
Prior Approvals.....	15
Preliminary Plan.....	15
BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION OF ISSUES	15
REQUIRED FINDINGS	16
Compliance with the intents and requirements of the Zone.....	16
Project Plan Data Table.....	20
Conformance to the approved and adopted Sector Plan.....	22
Compatibility with the general neighborhood.....	23
Adequacy of existing or programmed public services.....	23
More desirable than the standard method of development.....	24
Provision of moderately priced dwelling units.....	24
Requirement for forest conservation.....	24
Requirements for water quality resource protection.....	24
APPENDIX	25
Transportation Planning Division Memorandum....	26
Environmental Planning Division Memorandum.....	29
Letter from Helen Frederick, Pyramid Atlantic	31

SUMMARY

The Application proposes 415,825 gross square feet of residential development, consisting of approximately 200 multi-family dwelling units and including 25 moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs). Approximately 2,000 square feet will be devoted to an "arts incubator" space for selected artists' work and exhibit space open to the public. The applicant also filed a Preliminary Plan, application #120060400, which is being processed concurrently with the Project Plan and will be heard by the Planning Board on the same day. The amenities and facilities proposed include a public plaza connecting Wisconsin Avenue, Woodmont Avenue and the NIH Gateway park, off-site streetscape improvements including placing utilities underground, and the indoor arts incubator space. The arts space will open out to the plaza in clement weather, and temporary exhibits will be held outdoors as well. Staff recommends approval of the Project Plan with the conditions listed in the Recommendation section below.

The Applicant has met with the Land Use Committee of the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board, the executive committees of the East Bethesda and Glenbrook Village Civic Associations, and members of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Community for Public Space, Arts and Amenities regarding appropriate amenities and public use space for this wholly residential project on the north edge of the CBD.

The issues addressed during review include the appropriate amenity contributions for this residential project to make to the Woodmont Triangle area in exchange for the Optional Method density, the best location for vehicular access to and from the site for drop-off, loading and the parking garage, the amount of streetscape to be provided, and the design of the public plaza to be inviting to the public and visible from the adjacent streets.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff recommends **Approval** of Project Plan 920060060 with the following conditions:

1. Development Ceiling

The proposed development shall be limited to 200 units in 415,825 (maximum) gross square feet of residential development.

2. Building Height/Mass

The height of the three proposed building elements shall not exceed 90 feet as measured from Battery Lane.

3. Transportation Improvements

- a. Enter into a traffic mitigation agreement to participate in the Bethesda Transportation Mitigation Organization.
- b. Provide four bike racks around the site as determined at site plan review; provide sixteen bicycle lockers in the proposed structured parking garage.

4. Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)

The applicant shall provide 25 MPDUs (or 12.5% of the total number of units) on-site, consistent with the requirements of Chapter 25A.

5. Public Use Space

- a. The Applicant shall provide 19,301 square feet or 27% of the net site area of on-site public use space.
- b. The proposed on-site public use space must be easily and readily accessible to the general public.

6. Streetscape

- a. The Applicant shall provide the full Bethesda streetscape along the property's frontages on Wisconsin Avenue, Battery Lane and Woodmont Avenue.
 - b. Utilities shall be placed underground along the property's perimeter on Wisconsin Avenue, Battery Lane and Woodmont Avenue.
 - c. Streetscape improvements shall be in accordance with the 1992 Bethesda CBD Streetscape Technical Manual as amended. The streetscape includes the Bethesda paver, the Bethesda Lantern on Wisconsin Avenue, the Washington
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Globe on Battery Lane and Woodmont Avenue, trash receptacles, bike racks and street trees along Wisconsin Avenue and Battery Lane. All best efforts shall be made during demolition and construction to save the existing street trees on Battery Lane.

7. Staging of Amenity Features

- a. The proposed project shall be developed in one phase.
- b. Landscaping is to be installed no later than the next growing season after completion of the buildings and public plaza.
- c. The arts incubator space is to be completed prior to occupancy of the residential units.
- d. All streetscape improvements shall be installed prior to occupancy of the buildings.

8. Maintenance and Management Organization

Initially, the Applicant, and subsequently, within ninety days of formation, the Condominium Association shall become a member and enter into an agreement with the Bethesda Urban Partnership for the purpose of maintaining off-site public open spaces.

9. The Arts Incubator

- a. An "arts incubator" space of approximately 2,000 square feet shall be provided within the building facing onto Wisconsin Avenue and the public plaza; the space will be dedicated to studio and exhibit space for "emerging" artists selected by a local arts panel, for a specific time period.
- b. The selection of the artists, their length of tenure in the arts space, required exhibits, hours of public operation, and rules of participation in the program shall be determined prior to site plan review but shall not delay the Applicant's approvals; composition of the selection panel will be determined by members of the Board of the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District, the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council, and Park and Planning staff prior to site plan review.
- c. The future residential condominium association shall pay the utilities for the arts incubator space, assure the permanent availability of the space for artists' studio and exhibit activity and have a resident member serve ex-officio on the Bethesda Urban Partnership's management team for the arts space.

d. The Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) will manage the arts incubator space; BUP may charge a nominal fee to the artists for supplemental insurance on the arts space not covered by the condominium association.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Surrounding Vicinity

The proposed development is located on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue at the north edge of the Bethesda Central Business District. The National Institute of Health (NIH)'s gateway green space is directly north of the site. North and east are residential townhouses in the R-60/TDR zone. Across Wisconsin Avenue to the east are properties in the CBD-1 zone, including older low-rise offices and the new Rosedale Park residential complex at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Rosedale Avenue. The East Bethesda residential neighborhood is further to the east. To the south across Battery Lane are a gas station, the Monocle office building and a 3-story retail and office building, all in the CBD-1 zone. The site directly to the west is zoned PD-75, currently occupied by a large single family home and a 3-story office building, and is the subject of a pending zoning case. Further west and southwest are older 3-4 story brick apartment buildings in the Battery Lane District of the CBD.

The site is within the Woodmont Triangle Amendment Study Area, before County Council for final approval, and is the northern-most parcel in the "Wisconsin North Corridor District" of the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan.



BATTERY LANE/ WOODMONT TRIANGLE STUDY AREA