



**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** December 9, 2005

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Rose Krasnow, Chief *RK*  
Catherine Conlon, Supervisor *CC*  
Development Review Division

**FROM:** Richard A. Weaver (301) 495-4544 *RAW*  
Development Review Division

**REVIEW TYPE:** Preliminary Plan Review

**APPLYING FOR:** Consolidation of Parts of Lots 19 and 20

**PROJECT NAME:** 8400 Wisconsin Avenue

**CASE #:** 120060490 (Formerly 1-06040)

**REVIEW BASIS:** Chapter 50, Montgomery County Subdivision Regulations

**ZONE:** CBD-1 optional method

**LOCATION:** Northeastern quadrant of the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue  
(MD 355) and Battery Lane.

**MASTER PLAN:** Bethesda CBD

**APPLICANT:** Crimson 8400 Bethesda, L.L.C.

**HEARING DATE:** December 22, 2005

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Approval, pursuant to Chapter 50 of the Montgomery County Subdivision Regulations, and subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Approval under this preliminary plan is limited to a maximum of 200 residential units, including 25 MPDU's and a 2,000 square foot "arts incubator" space.
- 2) Prior to approval of the site plan signature set, enter into a traffic mitigation agreement to participate in the Bethesda Transportation Mitigation Organization.
- 3) Provide four bike racks in proximity to the Battery Lane entrance and sixteen bicycle lockers in the proposed structured parking garage, near stairwell or elevator shaft, location to be shown on the site plan.
- 4) Record plat to contain a note, "Access to Wisconsin Avenue Denied".
- 5) Compliance with conditions of approval for Project Plan #920060060 (Formerly 9-06006).
- 6) Prior to approval of the signature set of the site plan, the applicant must provide a noise study prepared by a professional engineer with competency in acoustical analysis of projected transportation noise levels affecting the site.
  - a) At site plan review, minimize noise impacts to outdoor spaces through noise-effective site and building design, with focus on plaza and balcony areas. All residential units exposed to exterior noise levels exceeding 65 dBA, Ldn shall be subject to interior noise mitigation conditions to be applied at time of site plan approval.
- 7) Compliance with the following conditions of approval of the preliminary forest conservation plan, including documentation for use of approved forest bank, or location of offsite forestation prior to recordation of plat. The applicant shall satisfy all conditions prior to recording of plat(s) or MCDPS issuance of sediment and erosion control permits, as applicable.
- 8) Final approval of the number and location of buildings, dwelling units, on-site parking, site circulation, sidewalks, and bikepaths will be determined at site plan.
- 9) A landscape and lighting plan must be submitted as part of the site plan application for review and approval by technical staff.
- 10) Final approval of the number and location of buildings, dwelling units, on-site parking, site circulation, sidewalks, and bike paths will be determined at site plan.
- 11) Final number of MPDU's as per condition #10 above to be determined at the time of site plan.
- 12) Compliance with conditions of MCDPWT letter dated, December 2, 2005 unless otherwise amended.
- 13) Compliance with the conditions of approval of the MCDPS stormwater management approval dated December 8, 2005.
- 14) The Adequate Public Facility (APF) review for the preliminary plan will remain valid for sixty-one (61) months from the date of mailing of the Planning Board opinion.
- 15) Other necessary easements.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION:**

The property, identified as Lots 19 and 20 of the Northwest Park subdivision (Subject Property), was originally recorded in 1910. The Subject Property is located on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) at the northern edge of the Bethesda Central Business District. (Attachment 1) The site is bordered by Battery Lane to the south and Woodmont Avenue to the east. The NIH campus and a large NIH green space are contiguous to the northern property line of the Subject Property. Town homes abut the property to the east, with a mixture of residential, office, retail and service station uses to the west and south. The former Sheraton Hotel, now operated by Clarion, currently occupies the site.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

This preliminary plan is being reviewed under the optional method of development in the CBD-1 zone, hence, the submission of Project Plan #920060060. The application proposes to create one (1) lot of 1.64 acres for the construction of a single structure with three distinct building elements connected by a common plaza and underground parking. (Attachment 2) There will be a total of 200 multi-family dwelling units to include 25 MPDU's, and 375 underground parking spaces. The structures will be nine stories tall but may not exceed the ninety (90) foot height limitation established under the CBD-1 zone optional method. Access to the underground parking will be restricted to Battery Lane and Woodmont Avenue only. The State Highway Administration has denied access to Wisconsin Avenue. Review staff has carefully reviewed and approved full vehicular movements in and out of the underground parking lot at the locations shown on the preliminary plan. The site will generate more than 30 peak-hour weekday vehicle trips and therefore, is subject to a Local Area Transportation Review (LATR), discussed in the Transportation section of this report.

This project proposes new public open spaces and extensive streetscape improvements, which are detailed in the project plan staff report. The application also proposes a 2,000 square foot arts incubator site to provide workspace for "emerging artists." Details of the incubator space will need to be finalized prior to site plan signature set approval.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Master Plan Compliance**

The plan is in conformance with the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Plan and the pending Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the 1994 Sector Plan. The Amendment does not propose changes for this site. The proposal conforms to the goals of the 1994 Bethesda CBD Plan which encourages higher residential density in and around the Metro station and for the provision of MPDU's. The Plan also promotes pedestrian friendly design and improvements to public spaces. This plan meets the overall sector plan goals.

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## Zoning Ordinance Compliance

The project conforms to the development standards of the CBD-1, optional method, pursuant to Section 59-C-6.23 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance. Please refer to the Preliminary Plan Data Table and Checklist for details. (Attachment 3)

## Subdivision Regulations

The proposed preliminary plan complies with Chapter 50 of the Montgomery County Code, Subdivision Regulations. The plan has been reviewed by the review agencies comprising the Development Review Committee and has been found to be adequate with respect to all public facilities, safety, and pedestrian circulation. Agency approvals to that effect are noted on the Preliminary Plan Data Table and Checklist.

## Transportation

### Local Area Transportation Review

The proposed development of was reviewed for LATR as a 208 unit residential complex and is anticipated to generate 68 AM peak hour trips and 68 PM peak hour trips during a regular weekday peak periods. An LATR study was performed to determine the impact the proposed development would have upon the adjacent transportation infrastructure.

Five signalized intersections adjacent to the development were selected for analysis: Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) at Woodmont Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) at Battery Lane, Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) at Cordell Avenue, Woodmont Avenue at Battery Lane and Woodmont Avenue at Cordell Avenue. As shown in the table below, all studied intersections are estimated to operate within the established Bethesda Central Business (CBD) District Critical Lane Volume (CLV) threshold of 1800 vehicles.

The following table shows the CLV analysis results for the studied intersections:

<u>Roadway Intersection</u>	<b>Current CLV levels</b> <u>(AM/PM)</u>	<b>Background CLV levels</b> <u>(AM/PM)</u>	<b>Projected Future CLV</b> <u>(AM/PM)</u>
Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)/Woodmont Avenue	867/1053	870/1063	875/1065
Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)/Battery Lane	926/943	931/962	941/970
Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)/Cordell Avenue	656/726	660/750	663/754
Woodmont Avenue/ Battery Lane	871/684	881/694	883/695
Woodmont Avenue/ Cordell Avenue	578/505	579/514	581/515

## Master Plan Roadways and Bikeways

Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) is a six lane major divided highway within 104 feet right-of-way. Wisconsin Avenue serves as a major conduit between the Capital Beltway (1.5 miles north of the property) and downtown Washington, DC. Woodmont Avenue is a major arterial serving as an alternate north-south route to Wisconsin Avenue. In the vicinity of the site, Woodmont Avenue is a four lane arterial of 80 feet of right-of-way. Battery Lane is a four-lane roadway connecting Wisconsin Avenue to the east with Old Georgetown Road (MD 187) to the south. Battery Lane runs along the southern frontage of the subject property with 70 feet of right-of-way. Access to the site is one full service driveway from Battery Lane and another full service driveway on Woodmont Avenue. Service vehicles (refuse and delivery trucks) will use a reserved access drive on Woodmont Avenue.

According to the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, two bicycle facilities exist in the vicinity of the proposed development: a shared-use path (SP-62) alongside Woodmont Avenue from Wisconsin Avenue to Battery Lane and a proposed shared road bikeway (SR - 10) along Battery Lane between the National Institute of Health campus and the Capital Crescent Trail.

## Pedestrian Access

The adjacent signalized intersections have pedestrian crosswalks on most approaches. There are three marked crosswalks except for northern side at the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) and Battery Lane. A marked pedestrian crosswalk was not provided on the northern side in order to allow for more efficient traffic circulation onto Wisconsin Avenue. Intersection signal timing and signage is adequate for pedestrians at all intersections studied. The project proposes to tie into the existing network of pedestrian facilities within the Bethesda CBD. The project will also incorporate pedestrian access across the development from Wisconsin Avenue to Woodmont Avenue for improved pedestrian connectivity.

## **Environmental**

The forest conservation requirements shall be met by use of offsite forest planting or banking as appropriate, to be determined.

Site plan shall demonstrate the continuing commitment to noise and air quality compatibility by minimizing the potential negative effects of the surrounding parking garages to the north and west through site design and architectural measures.

## **Conclusion**

Staff's review of Preliminary Plan Amendment #120060400 (Formerly 1-06040), 8400 Wisconsin Avenue, indicates that the plan conforms to the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan. The proposed preliminary plan is consistent with the master plan goal to encourage revitalization and residential development in proximity to Metro stations. The plan encourages pedestrian activities by providing improved,

widened sidewalks, a public plaza which connect adjacent streets to bus stops and an overall improvement to public amenities including an art incubator. Staff also finds that the proposed preliminary plan complies with Chapter 50 of the Montgomery County Code, Subdivision Regulations, as indicated in the Data Table in that public facilities will be adequate to support and service the area of the proposed subdivision. Staff further finds that the size, width, shape, and orientation of the proposed lot is appropriate for the location of the subdivision. As such, staff recommends approval of the preliminary plan, subject to the above conditions.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment A Vicinity Map
- Attachment B Preliminary Plan
- Attachment C Data Table and Checklist