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## Departure from Design Standards

**DDS- 557**

Application	General Data
<b>Project Name:</b> Summerfield at Morgan Station, Phase I  <b>Location:</b> West side of Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard and south of Ridgefield Boulevard  <b>Applicant/Address:</b> Summit Properties 1420 Spring Hill Road Suite 400 McLean, Virginia 22102	Date Accepted: 3/14/05
	Planning Board Action Limit: N/A
	Plan Acreage: 12.25
	Zone: L-A-C
	Dwelling Units: 478
	Square Footage: 210,000
	Planning Area: 72
	Tier: Developed
	Council District: 05
	Municipality: N/A
200-Scale Base Map: 201NE07	

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
Reduction of size of regular and compact off-street parking spaces	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: 12/17/05 (CB-12-2003)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site and Notice of Hearing Mailed: 05/02/05

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Laxmi Srinivas	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DENIAL	DISCUSSION
		X	

May 25, 2005

**TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT:**

TO: The Prince George's County Planning Board

VIA: Jimi Jones, Acting Zoning Supervisor

FROM: Laxmi Srinivas, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **Departure from Design Standards DDS-557**

REQUEST: **Departure from the parking size requirements of Section 27-558, Parking Space Sizes, of the Zoning Ordinance.**

RECOMMENDATION: **DENIAL**

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NOTE:

The Planning Board has scheduled this application for a public hearing on the agenda date indicated above. The Planning Board also encourages all interested persons to request to become a person of record in this application. Requests to become a person of record should be made in writing and addressed to the Development Review Division at the address indicated above. Please call 301-952-3530 for additional information.

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**FINDINGS:**

A. **Location and Field Inspection:** The subject property is located on the west side of Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard and south of Ridgefield Boulevard. The property has 450 feet of frontage on Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard. Vehicular access to the property is from Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard.

B. **Development Data Summary:**

	<b>EXISTING</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
Zone(s)	L-A-C	L-A-C
Use(s)	Multifamily Residential	Multifamily Residential
Acreage	12.25	12.25
Lots	1	1
Parcels	N/A	N/A
Square Footage/GFA	210,000	210,000

C. **History:** The District Council approved a Comprehensive Design Plan CDP-0301 for 900 residential units, 114,000 square feet of retail, and 200,000 square feet of office on 91.9 acres of land in the L-A-C Zone. The Planning Board approved a Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-03124 for the subject lot and two out parcels on March 11, 2004 (PGCPB NO. 04-46). The Planning Board approved a Specific Design Plan SDP-0403 for 478 multifamily residential units on the subject lot on September 23, 2004 (PGCPB No. 04-194).

D. **Master Plan Recommendation:** The 2004 Approved Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Areas Sector Plan recommends residential uses for this site and retains the property in the L-A-C Zone.

E. **Request:** The applicant is requesting a departure from the requirements of Section 27-558, Parking Space Sizes, of the Zoning Ordinance. Section 27-558 of the Zoning Ordinance states that the size of parking spaces shall be as follows:

Standard Car Spaces	
Parallel	22 by 8
Nonparallel	19 by 9.5

Compact Car Spaces	
Parallel	19 by 7
Nonparallel	16.5 by 8

The applicant is proposing the following parking space sizes:

Standard Car Spaces	
Parallel	22 by 8
Nonparallel	19 by 8.5

Compact Car Spaces	
Nonparallel	16 by 8

The applicant is proposing to reduce the width of the standard parking spaces from 9.5 feet to 8.5 feet and the length of the compact parking spaces from 16.5 feet to 16 feet.

F. **Surrounding Uses:** The property is surrounded with the following uses:

North—Vacant property in the L-A-C Zone

South—New Metro station for Morgan Boulevard

East—Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard and vacant property in the L-A-C Zone across Garrett A. Morgan Boulevard

West—Park property in the R-80 Zone

G. **Landscape Manual Requirements:** The property is subject to the requirements of Section 4.2 and Section 4.7 of the *Landscape Manual*. The proposal complies with these requirements in the *Landscape Manual*.

H. **Signs:** No freestanding signs are proposed with this application.

I. **Other Issues:**

1. The Permit Review Section (memorandum dated April 19, 2005) recommends providing the parking layout within the garages and converting one of every four handicapped accessible parking spaces to van accessible spaces.
2. The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Section (memorandum dated March 29, 2005) stated that the existing fire engine service, ambulance service and paramedic service are within the travel time guidelines. The existing police facilities will adequately serve the population generated by the proposed multifamily apartment buildings.
3. The Transportation Planning Section (memorandum dated May 2, 2005) has no comments regarding the proposal.
4. The Environmental Planning Section (memorandum dated March 26, 2005) indicates that there are no environmental issues related to this proposal.
5. The Community Planning Division (memorandum dated April 19, 2005) states that the property is in the Developed Tier. The 2004 Approved Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town Center Metro Sector Plan recommends residential uses for this site and retains the property in the L-A-C Zone. The Division has expressed concerns regarding the proposed reduction in parking space sizes because the size of the average family car does not justify the reduction in parking space sizes. The study submitted by the applicant has also stated that the length of cars and trucks has increased significantly since 1987.
6. The Urban Design Review Section (memorandum dated April 13, 2005) stated that there are no *Landscape Manual* issues related to this proposal.
7. The Historic Preservation Section (memorandum dated April 11, 2005) stated that three undisturbed prehistoric archeological sites were identified on the property. A final report

(Phase I Archeological Survey of the Proposed Addison Road to Largo Town Center Extension of the Metrorail Blue Line, Prince George's County, Maryland, Final Report 1997) regarding these sites was submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT). The report recommended no additional work. The Maryland Historic Preservation Officer concluded with this consideration. Since the preliminary plan and specific design plan for this project were completed prior to the Planning Board's directive on archeology, the Historic Preservation Section staff requests that the applicant submit a copy of the report and the letter from the Maryland Historic Preservation Office.

**J. Required Findings:**

**(A) Section 27-239.01(b)(9) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that in order for the Planning Board to grant the departure, it shall make the following findings:**

**1. The purposes of this Subtitle will be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal.**

The purposes of the Zoning Ordinance are set forth in Section 27-102. They are varied in nature, but in general are to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents and workers in Prince George's County. In this instance, the facts establish that granting the requested departure will jeopardize these purposes.

The total number of required and proposed parking spaces for the above multifamily residential development are as follows:

Total number of required parking spaces (with the required parking space sizes)=755

Total number of parking spaces (with the required parking space sizes) that can be accommodated on the subject property=765

Total number of parking spaces (with the reduced parking space sizes) proposed by the applicant=827

The applicant is proposing 72 additional spaces than the required number of parking spaces. The applicant cannot accommodate 827 parking spaces with the required sizes on the subject property. Therefore, the applicant is requesting a Departure from Design Standards for the parking space size requirements. Although the applicant cannot accommodate 827 parking spaces with the required sizes on the subject property, the required number of parking spaces and ten additional parking spaces (a total of 765 parking spaces with the required parking space sizes) can be accommodated on the property. Since the applicant can accommodate the required parking on the property, granting a Departure from Design Standards for reduction in parking space sizes is not justified.

The applicant has provided two studies, *The Dimensions of Parking* by the Urban Land Institute and *Guidelines for Parking Geometrics* by the Parking Consultants Council as background information for justifying the departure.

Both the studies state that the parking dimension guidelines should consider the type of the user using the parking space and that the local zoning ordinances must develop

parking standards that are acceptable to the community. They also state that the length of LTVUS (Light truck, van, sport utility and sport wagon vehicles) and SUVs (Suburban Utility Vehicles) have increased significantly since 1987 and that the sale of small cars dropped significantly in the 1990s.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the average car is not getting smaller. Providing smaller parking spaces in a residential development will result in a hardship for residents with larger cars. So, a reduction in parking space sizes to accommodate a larger number of parking spaces (827) instead of the required number of parking spaces with the required sizes (755) cannot be justified. The purpose of this Subtitle will not be equally well or better served by the applicant's proposal because the required number of parking spaces and the required parking space sizes can be provided without granting the Departure from Design Standards.

**2. The departure is the minimum necessary, given the specific circumstances of the request.**

The requested departure is not the minimum necessary. The applicant can accommodate the required number of parking spaces with the required sizes on the property. Therefore, the reduction in parking space sizes is not justified.

**3. The departure is necessary in order to alleviate circumstances that are unique to the site or prevalent in areas of the County developed prior to November 29, 1949.**

The existing size of the property is adequate to accommodate the required number of parking spaces with the required sizes. The applicant is requesting a reduction in parking space sizes to accommodate 72 additional spaces, and, therefore exceed the required number of parking spaces. Staff finds that the departure is not necessary to alleviate circumstances that are unique to the site and unique to the use of the property as a multifamily residential use. The desire to exceed the required number of parking spaces by reducing the size of the spaces does not, in our opinion, constitute a unique circumstance.

**4. The departure will not impair the visual, functional or environmental quality or integrity of the site or of the surrounding neighborhood.**

Providing smaller parking spaces in a residential development will result in a hardship for residents with larger cars. Therefore, the departure will impair the functional quality or integrity of the site or the surrounding area by providing parking spaces that are not adequate in size.

**CONCLUSION:**

Based on the preceding analysis and findings, it is recommended that DDS-557 be DENIED.