



*Note: Staff reports can be accessed at [www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm](http://www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm).*

## Detailed Site Plan

## DSP- 07040

Application	General Data	
<b>Project Name:</b> The City of College Park Public Parking Garage  <b>Location:</b> 4509 Knox Road College Park, MD Southwest corner of Knox Road and Yale Avenue  <b>Applicant/Address:</b> Capstone Development Corporation 431 Office Park Drive Birmingham, AL 35223	Date Accepted:	11/6/2007
	Planning Board Action Limit:	01/30/2008
	Plan Acreage:	.63
	Zone:	R-55, M-U-I/DDOZ
	Dwelling Units:	NA
	Gross Floor Area:	115,735
	Planning Area:	66
	Tier:	Developed
	Council District:	3
	Municipality:	College Park
200-Scale Base Map:	209NE04	

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
Approval of 115,735-square-foot public parking garage for 300 parking spaces with 5,800-square-foot commercial/retail space	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: (CB-12-2003)	8/8/2007
	Sign(s) Posted on Site and Notice of Hearing Mailed:	12/24/2007

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: H. Zhang, AICP	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan DSP-07040, City of College Park Public Parking Garage

The Urban Design staff has completed review of the subject application and appropriate referrals. The following evaluation and findings lead to a recommendation of APPROVAL with conditions, as described in the Recommendation section of this report.

**EVALUATION**

The detailed site plan was reviewed and evaluated for compliance with the following criteria:

- a. The requirements of the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ);
- b. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the DDOZ, R-55, M-U-I Zones and Part 10B Airport Compatibility;
- c. The requirements of the *Landscape Manual*;
- d. The requirements of the Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance;
- e. Referrals.

**FINDINGS**

Based upon evaluation and analysis of the subject application, the Urban Design staff recommends the following findings:

- 1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of an 115,735-square-foot public parking garage for 300 parking spaces with a 5,800-square-foot commercial/retail space to be operated by the City of College Park.
- 2. **Development Data Summary:**

	<b>EXISTING</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
Zone(s)	M-U-I/R-55/DDOZ	M-U-I/R-55/DDOZ
Use(s)	Residential	Public Buildings and uses (Parking garage)/ Commercial
Acreage	0.63	0.63
Lots	4	1
Square Footage/GFA	4,913	115,735 ( of which 5,800 sq.ft. commercial/retail space)

OTHER DEVELOPMENT DATA

<b>Parking Required</b>	<b>34 spaces</b>
For 5,800 square feet of commercial/retail uses at 1 space per 150 square feet for the first 3,000 square feet and 1 space per 200 square feet above the first 3,000 square feet	
<b>Handicapped spaces required</b>	<b>7 spaces</b>
Loading Required	None†
<b>Parking Provided*</b>	<b>300</b>
Of which regular parking spaces	211
Compact parking spaces	82
Handicapped spaces	7

**Notes:** \* The provided parking spaces include the required parking for the proposed retail establishments and the additional public parking as another use in this DSP application. The number of required spaces for the handicapped is based on the total number of parking spaces provided for the project.

† The DSP contains approximately 5,800 square feet of commercial/retail space at the first floor of the building fronting Knox Road and a portion of Yale Avenue at its intersection with Knox Road. According to the applicant, the total square footage will be further divided into four store spaces and each store will have less than 2,000 square feet of gross floor area. Since the sector plan does not amend the loading requirements, Part 11 of the Zoning Ordinance will govern. Per Section 27-582 (a), if any retail sale and service store is less than 2,000 square feet, there is no off-street loading space required.

- Location:** The site is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Knox Road and Yale Avenue, east of Baltimore Avenue, within the City of College Park, in Planning Area 66, and Council District 1. The site is also situated in Area 1 (Town Center), Subarea 1c, of the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*, where detailed site plan review is required for conformance with the development district overlay zone (DDOZ) standards.
- Surrounding Uses:** The site is bounded on the east side by Yale Avenue; on the north side by Knox Road; on the west side by the existing developed sites in the M-U-I (Mixed-use Infill) Zone and on the south side by the existing properties in the R-55 (one-family detached residential) Zone. The property, consisting of four lots, is split zoned with two lots in the M-U-I Zone and two lots in the R-55 Zone.
- Previous Approvals:** The entire site was formerly zoned R-55. The two lots that are fronting and close to Knox Road were improved with a parking lot. The two lots away from Knox Road were improved with single-family detached houses. The 2002 College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and SMA, which was approved by the District Council on April 30, 2002 (CR-18-2002), rezoned the portion of the site that was close to Knox Road from the R-55 Zone to the M-U-I Zone and

retained the two lots with existing single-family detached houses in the R-55 Zone. The site has approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 29492-2007-00, which is valid through November 5, 2010. The site also has an approved standard exemption from the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance.

6. **Design Features:** The subject site is a roughly rectangular property with the short side fronting Knox Road and the long side fronting Yale Avenue. The proposed parking garage and commercial/retail space are in one building footprint that straddles four lots on the site. The first floor of the building fronting Knox Road has approximately 5,800 square feet of space that is for commercial/retail uses. The rest of the first floor and the upper floors of the building will be used for the proposed 300 public parking spaces. The parking garage will be accessed from Yale Avenue. There is an enclosed trash dumpster and a transformer located to the west of the building that will be accessed directly from Knox Road.

The elevation fronting Knox Road shows a four-story, flat roof building with the first floor occupied by commercial storefronts. The elevation is finished with a combination of brick and E.I.F.S. bands and is decorated with metal railings. Precast concrete sills, bands and copings have been used to provide additional visual interest. The first-floor storefronts fronting Knox Road wrap around the corner to occupy a further two bays in Yale Avenue. The elevation fronting Yale Avenue carries similar architectural treatments in terms of design and finishing materials. Additional height has been added to the elevator shaft on this elevation. The design of the two main elevations is consistent with the vision of the sector plan, which calls for a main street environment with rich street-level treatments. The western elevation, with storefronts continuing for two bays, shows a predominantly brick finish and is decorated with metal railings and precast concrete bands. Most of the western elevation will be screened by the existing building from the views on Knox Road. The southern elevation has no storefront element and is finished with a combination of brick and E.I. F.S. panels. The applicant has also submitted color renderings for each elevation. However, the color rendering is not consistent with the south elevation.

A signage package consisting of three types of signs has been proposed with this application: three building mounted blade signs entitled "Parking" are located on the elevations fronting Knox Road and Yale Avenue, the face of each sign measuring 25 square feet; four 25-square-foot signs are located on the canopies fronting Knox Road; and two internally illuminated signs are located above the entrance to the parking lobby and in the middle of the elevation fronting Yale Avenue. The parking-lobby sign measures 15 square feet and the illuminated sign on Yale Avenue measures 30 square feet. For the building mounted sign, the maximum allowable sign face area according to Section 27-613 (c) is based on the total linear feet of building frontage and the number of stories of each building, up to 400 square feet of signage per building. The DDOZ standards call for an equivalent or smaller sign face area than the square footage per Section 27-613 (c). The proposed sign package is in general conformance with the sign face area requirements. However, the three proposed blade signs and one of the internally illuminated signs are defined as projecting signs by the Zoning Ordinance, which limits the number of this type of sign to one per building in the conventional zones. Since this site is located at the intersection of Knox Road and Yale Avenue, two projecting signs are necessary. Staff recommends that one blade sign be retained on the elevation fronting Knox Road, that one internally illuminated sign be retained on the elevation fronting Yale Avenue, and that an additional canopy sign—of the same size as the rest of the proposed canopy signs for the corner store—be located along the Yale Avenue frontage. The rest of the signage package, including four canopy signs on the elevation fronting Knox Road and one building-mounted sign on the elevation fronting Yale Avenue, is acceptable. A condition has been proposed in the recommendation section of this report to require the application to remove two blade signs in order to reduce visual clutter prior to certification.

## COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **The 2002 Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment and the Standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ):** The College Park US 1 Corridor plan defines long-range land use and development policies, detailed zoning changes, design standards and a DDOZ for the US 1 Corridor area. The land use concept of the sector plan divides the corridor into six areas for the purpose of examining issues and opportunities and formulating recommendations. Each area has been further divided into subareas for the purpose of defining the desired land use types, mixes, and development character. The subject site is in Area 1 (Town Center), Subarea 1c, east of US 1, but not fronting on Baltimore Avenue. The vision for Area 1 is to create a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use town center that is the focus of community activity. A variety of retail/commercial, office, entertainment, residential, and civic uses are encouraged in mid- and high-rise buildings. The street environment will have wide sidewalks with buildings sited close to the street and close to or attached to each other. The primary building entrance will be provided from the street to facilitate convenient pedestrian connections. Vertical mixed-use buildings are encouraged with ground floor retail and office or multifamily residential located above the first floor. Amenities such as public plazas and urban open spaces should be integrated into the development of the town center. Parking should be located in lots situated to the side or rear of properties and use of parking garages and shared parking is strongly encouraged. The land use recommendations for Subarea 1c (east side of US 1) include development with vertical mixed-use buildings to enhance the main street character and serve both students and the local neighborhood; compact infill development; adequate screening, buffering and tapering of building heights adjacent to single-family neighborhoods; structured and/or shared parking; and the introduction of plazas, public open space areas, improved pedestrian connections, street furniture and public art.

The application as proposed in the subject detailed site plan, including the uses (vertical mix of commercial/retail and a public parking garage), site layout, and the streetscape it will create along the Knox Road and portion of Yale Avenue, is in general compliance with the land use vision and recommendation for Subarea 1c, even though certain DDOZ standards have to be amended in order to achieve the proposed development.

In accordance with Section 27-548.25 (b), the Planning Board shall find that the site plan meets applicable development district standards in order to approve a detailed site plan. The development district standards are organized into three categories: public areas; site design; and building design. The applicant has submitted a statement of justification that provides a detailed explanation of how the proposed mixed-use project conforms to each development district standard and why the requested amendments are required.

- a. The detailed site plan meets most of the standards with the exception of several development district standards to which the applicant has requested an amendment. In order to allow the plan to deviate from the development district standards, the Planning Board must find that the alternative development district standards will benefit the development and the development district and will not substantially impair implementation of the sector plan. The amendments that the applicant has requested are discussed below.

**PUBLIC AREAS:**

**P4. Street Trees**

- A. Street trees shall be used along both sides of all roadways within the development district to define the street edge, provide a shaded overhead canopy and establish a unifying element to the street environment.**

**Comment:** The DSP does provide street trees along Knox Road, but does not provide street trees along Yale Avenue. The applicant has requested an amendment to this standard along Yale Avenue because of tight site conditions and the narrow right-of-way (ROW) of Yale Avenue, which is 40 feet. The DSP maintains the minimum one-foot build-to-line and results in a sidewalk of approximately seven feet, which is too narrow to enable planting of any street trees. Yale Avenue is a City-maintained roadway. Staff agrees with the applicant, which is the City of College Park, that the ROW of Yale Avenue cannot accommodate both the sidewalk and street trees at the same time.

- B. Medium to large deciduous shade trees shall be utilized for street trees, and planted between 30 and 40 feet on center. Street trees shall be installed at a height of 12 feet and 2 ½ inch caliper.**

**Comment:** The street trees proposed with this DSP will meet the height and caliper requirements and are aligned with the distance between piers of the garage: approximately 42 feet from center to center, which is two feet beyond the upper range required by this standard. The objective of this placement is to achieve “rhythm” or “symmetry” between the street trees and the architecture. Staff agrees with the applicant’s request.

- F. The minimum planting area for street trees shall be six feet in width, eight feet in length and four feet deep. Wherever possible, the tree planting areas below the sidewalk pavement should be connected so that root zone space for trees can be shared.**

**Comment:** The applicant has requested an amendment to this standard to allow a narrower four-foot wide planter for the proposed street tree due to the confined site. Staff does have an objection to this amendment. However, the proposed street tree is *Acer rubrum* “Armstrong,” which can reach a height of 50 to 60 feet at maturity and requires a minimum 6-foot-wide tree lawn. A smaller street tree with a mature height of 30 to 45 feet would fit into the reduced planting area if a continuous underground planting area is provided. The applicant has indicated that the horticulturist of the City of College Park maintains that the reduced width is sufficient for the proposed *Acer rubrum* “Armstrong.” Since the trees will be planted on streets that are within the jurisdiction of the City of the College Park, the City’s recommendation will govern. A planting detail should be added to the landscape plan to demonstrate that the tree planting areas below the sidewalk pavement are connected. A condition to that effect has been proposed in the recommendation section of this report.

**P6. Utilities**

- A. All new development within the development district shall place utility lines underground. Utilities shall include, but are not limited to, electric, natural gas, fiber optics, cable television, telephone, water and sewer.**

**Comment:** The applicant has requested an amendment to modify the above standard. The applicant states that there is one utility pole carrying overhead lines located along the Knox Road frontage of the subject property. The utility pole is proposed to be retained. The applicant does not intend to underground the overhead utilities since there is no financing program in place at this time to implement a systematic undergrounding of utilities along the US 1 Corridor. The applicant will place new utility lines that serve the proposed development such as natural gas, fiber optic, cable television, telephone, and water and sewer service underground. The standard calls for reducing the visual impact of existing overhead utility lines and associated poles along Baltimore Avenue within the development district by consolidating utility pole usage, relocating utility poles, or placing existing utility lines underground. According to the applicant, the above standard has been met since the applicant is not providing any additional utility poles, the site is away from Baltimore Avenue, and the visual impact of the utility lines will be improved by the provision of attractive architecture, street trees, street lighting, and furniture. Staff agrees that undergrounding of utilities should be carried out systematically in order to reduce cost and minimize interruption to established operations and services. During the previous review and approval of various projects within the corridor, the City of College Park and the District Council acknowledged the need for a systematic approach and the need for each project to provide its financial fair share in order to implement this measure. In this application, the City of College Park is the applicant. The City is fully aware of this approach and is willing to provide financial assistance should the undergrounding of utilities occur in a systematic way in the future.

**SITE DESIGN**

**S2. Parking Areas**

- C. Landscaping, screening and buffering of all parking lots, and parking garages, within the development district shall comply with the provisions of the *Landscape Manual*, except as modified by the standards for the development district.**

**Comment:** This standard is technically not applicable to this application because the garage component is an indispensable part of the only building proposed on the site. This application has no surface parking and is subject only to Section 4.7 of the *Landscape Manual* due to the presence of a multifamily building to the south of the subject site. In accordance with the *Landscape Manual*, a Type B bufferyard is required. DDOZ Standard S4, Buffers and Screening, E below modifies this requirement.

- N. Parking garages shall be an integral component with the buildings and structures located on a parcel or property and shall incorporate similar high-quality building material colors(s) and massing. The height of the parking garage shall not exceed the height of adjacent buildings on the property. Whenever possible, the parking structure should be located in the interior of the parcel.**

**Comment:** This standard is not strictly applicable to this DSP because the proposed parking structure is also an indispensable portion of the proposed building. The sector plan strongly recommends the use of structure (multi-level garage) parking throughout the corridor, especially in the main street and town center areas. In addition, it is recommended that public or private parking garages be constructed for use by all property owners within the area. The parking garage will be owned and operated by the City of College Park and will be open to the general public. Most of the first floor of the proposed building that fronts Knox Road and Yale Avenue will be occupied by the proposed commercial/retail spaces. This DSP in general complies with this requirement and meets the intent of the sector plan for this subarea.

**S4. Buffers and Screening**

- A. All mechanical equipment, dumpsters, storage, service, loading and delivery areas shall be screened from public view, adjacent residential property and rights-of-way with an appropriate buffer consisting of plantings, wall or fences in compliance with the Screening Requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.**

**Comment:** The site plan includes a dumpster and a transformer site that are located in the northwest corner of the site. The compound is accessed directly from Knox Road. The applicant cannot completely satisfy the above standard because there is not enough space to provide a buffer as described in this standard and the utility company requires certain clearance for the transformer. The applicant has provided a brick wall and a wrought iron style door along the frontage of Knox Road. Staff agrees with the proposed screening, except for the door. A more sight-tight type of door should be utilized. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to provide a sight-tight door to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board prior to certification.

- E. The bufferyard requirements within the development district may be reduced to facilitate a compact form of development compatible with the urban character of the US 1 corridor. The minimum bufferyard requirements (landscape yard) for incompatible uses in the *Landscape Manual* (Section 4.7) may be reduced by 50 percent. The plant units required per 100 linear feet of property line or right-of-way shall also be reduced by 50 percent. Alternative Compliance shall not be required for these reductions.**

**A six-foot-high, opaque masonry wall or other opaque screening treatment shall be provided in conjunction with the reduced width of the bufferyard between office/retail/commercial uses and residential uses.**

**Comment:** The subject DSP has one boundary area adjacent to an existing multifamily building that needs to be buffered in accordance with the *Landscape Manual* because the proposed development is defined as a medium impact use, and when a medium impact use is adjacent to a multifamily use, a Type B bufferyard is required. A Type B bufferyard requires a minimum 30-foot building setback and a minimum 20-foot-wide landscaped yard to be planted with 80 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. The DDOZ standard allows the building to be sited 15 feet from the property line and the



bufferyard to be reduced to 10 feet. The applicant has requested an amendment to the building setback requirement. The site plan shows a 14-foot setback from the property. In addition, an emergency stairwell is projected five additional feet into the 14-foot setback. In order to mitigate the impact, the applicant has provided a six-foot-high brick wall along the site's entire southern boundary. Given the confined site, the proposed treatment will facilitate a compact form of development compatible with the urban character of the US 1 corridor.

## **S 5. Freestanding Signs**

- K. All new institutional, office and retail/commercial buildings shall provide a common sign plan when there is more than one principal building or multitenant (three or more businesses) building on a single parcel or a combination of parcels under common ownership. Common sign plans shall specify standards including lighting, colors, lettering style, size, height, quantity and location within the site and on the building. Requests for major exterior renovation (50 percent or more based on front façade in linear feet) or major rehabilitation (50 percent or more increase in GFA) shall also submit a common sign plan.**

**Comment:** This application includes only one building and does not have any freestanding sign, but it will have multiple tenants for the storefronts fronting on Knox Road. The tenant sign will be provided on the storefront awnings. At time of this review, the applicant does have sign details for each specific tenant and only identifies the size and location of the signs. The applicant has requested an amendment to this standard to allow additional time to pursue detailed information from the tenants. Since the sign permit will be issued by the Department of Environmental Resources and a detailed sign review will be carried out at time of permit issuance, staff agrees with the slight amendment to this standard.

## **BUILDING DESIGN**

### **B 1. Height, Scale, Massing and Size:**

- A. Retail/commercial, office and institutional buildings within an attached row in a block shall be similar in height and should not vary more than 15 percent relative to the average height in the row or block in the main street (3a and 3b) and town center (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d and 1e) subareas.**

**Comment:** The sector plan is clear that the community vision for this Main Street area is for low-rise mixed-use buildings. Specifically, the building heights map on page 201 of the sector plan indicates that the maximum height, in general, for Subarea 1c is four stories. The proposed development is a four story building. Since only a portion of the first floor at the street level is occupied by storefronts and the rest of the first floor and the upper floors are for parking, the garage has five levels. The existing buildings in the adjacent blocks are all two-story buildings. The proposed building varies by more than 15 percent relative to the average height in the area. The applicant has requested an amendment to this standard. Staff agrees with the applicant's request because the proposed building height is the maximum allowed by the sector plan and this subject site is the first infill project in the immediate area. The proposed development is of the type envisioned by the sector plan.

## **B1. Height, Scale, Massing and Size**

### **Massing**

- J. Service areas shall be architecturally integrated into the overall design of buildings.**

**Comment:** The site plan shows a dumpster and a transformer to be located outside of the building in the northwest corner of the site that will be accessed directly from Knox Road. According to the applicant, the proposed building will be a prefabricated structure. Because of site constraints and clearance requirements of the utility company, the service area could not be integrated into the building. Staff agrees with the proposal as long as the dumpster area is properly screened from the views on Knox Road.

## **B6. Building Services**

- F. Dumpsters shall be enclosed with a continuous solid, opaque masonry wall or other opaque screening treatment. Buildings should consolidate their garbage storage needs in a single, central location away from public view.**

**Comment:** As discussed previously, the site constraints result in a freestanding dumpster area that needs to be properly screened from public view on Knox Road. The applicant has requested an amendment to this standard to allow a door opening on the screening brick wall because the site has to be accessed from Knox Road. Staff believe that as long as a sight-tight door is employed and the door is kept closed, the dumpster area would be screened from public view.

- b. The applicant does not request an amendment to the following standard. However, staff believes that the standard warrants discussion:

### **PUBLIC AREAS:**

#### **P1. Road Network**

- A. Development should, where possible, provide for on-street parking.**

**Comment:** The application proposes no on-street parking. All parking provided will be within the parking garage, which will occupy part of the first floor and the rest of the upper floors of the building. The Urban Design Section believes that the proposed off-street parking is better than on-street parking for this site. However, since both Knox Road and Yale Avenue are within the jurisdiction of the City of College Park, the final decision on the necessity of on-street parking rests with the City. A condition of approval has been proposed to require the applicant to either revise the justification statement to include no on-street parking on both Knox Road and Yale Avenue or to revise the plan to provide on-street parking as recommended by the DDOZ standard..

8. **Zoning Ordinance:** The DSP application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements of the M-U-I Zone, R-55 Zone, the DDOZ Zone and Part 10B Airport Compatibility of the Zoning Ordinance, as follows:

- a. The general purpose of the M-U-I Zone is to permit, where recommended in applicable plans (in this case the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*), a mix of residential and commercial uses as infill development in areas that are already substantially developed.

Section 27-546.19. Site Plans for Mixed Uses requires that:

**(c) A detailed site plan may not be approved unless the owner shows:**

- 1. The site plan meets all approval requirements in Part 3, Division 9;**
- 2. All proposed uses meet applicable development standards approved with the master plan, sector plan, transit district development plan, or other applicable plan;**

**Comment:** The site plan in general meets site design guidelines and development district standards of the 2002 College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and SMA and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) except for those discussed in Finding 7 above.

- 3. Proposed uses on the property will be compatible with one another;**
- 4. Proposed uses will be compatible with existing or approved future development on adjacent properties and an applicable transit or development district; and**

**Comment:** The application proposes a mixture of commercial/retail and public parking in a vertical mixed-use format in a four-story, five-level building fronting Knox Road and Yale Avenue. The entire first floor of the building fronting Knox Road and a portion of Yale Avenue will be occupied by commercial/retail spaces. All parking will be accommodated within the building. No surface parking is provided with this application. A bufferyard in accordance with the DDOZ standards, with a slight modification, has been provided along the site's southern boundary area where the site is adjacent to an existing multifamily building. The properties to the west of the site are improved as various commercial establishments. The proposed development on the subject site is compatible to the adjacent existing uses.

- 5. Compatibility standards and practices set forth below will be followed, or the owner shows why they should not be applied:**
  - (A) Proposed buildings should be compatible in size, height, and massing to buildings on adjacent properties;**

**Comment:** The proposed mixed-use project is the first infill development in this area not immediately adjacent to US 1. The proposed building is larger in size and higher than the existing buildings. However, the sector plan calls for a four-to-eight-story building in this area. The proposed building is consistent with the sector plan. With more redevelopment coming to this area in the future, the proposed building is expected to be compatible in size, height, and massing with adjacent properties.

- (B) Primary facades and entries should face adjacent streets or public walkways and be connected by on-site walkways, so pedestrians may avoid crossing parking lots; and**

**Comment:** The proposed development is in a vertical mixed-use format and is in one building footprint. Except for the first floor fronting Knox Road and the portion of Yale Avenue around its intersection with Knox Road, the rest of the building will be used for parking. Because there is no surface parking in this project, pedestrians do not need to cross any parking lots or driveways.

- (C) Site design should minimize glare, light, and other visual intrusion into and impacts on yards, open areas, and building facades on adjacent properties;**

- (D) Building materials and color should be similar to materials and color on adjacent properties and in the surrounding neighborhoods, or building design should incorporate scaling, architectural detailing, or similar techniques to enhance compatibility;**

**Comment:** The commercial /retail component of this project is located at the street level of the vertical mixed-use building that fronts on Knox Road. The rest of the stories of the building are for proposed public parking. Due to the function of the proposed building, the site plan has minimized glare, light and visual intrusion into the adjacent properties. The proposed building design and materials of the development will constitute an upgrade when compared to the existing buildings in the vicinity.

- (E) Outdoor storage areas and mechanical equipment should be located and screened to minimize visibility from adjacent properties and public streets;**

**Comment:** The application does not include outdoor storage. The mechanical equipment will be located within the building. One transformer will be located on the northwest portion of the site where a trash dumpster is located. But the transformer along with the trash dumpster will be screened by a brick wall.

- (F) Signs should conform to applicable Development District Standards or to those in Part 12, unless the owner shows that its proposed signage program meets goals and objectives in applicable plans; and**

**Comment:** As discussed previously, a sign package consisting of projecting signs, building-mounted signs and canopy signs has been proposed for this DSP. The proposed signs are in general compliance with the requirements in Part 12 of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff recommends removal of two excessive projecting signs and addition of one canopy sign in order to avoiding visual clutter while still serving the advertising purposes of signage.

- (G) The owner or operator should minimize adverse impacts on adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood by appropriate setting of:**

- (i) **Hours of operation or deliveries;**
- (ii) **Location of activities with potential adverse impacts;**
- (iii) **Location and use of trash receptacles;**
- (iv) **Location of loading and delivery spaces;**
- (v) **Light intensity and hours of illumination; and**
- (vi) **Location and use of outdoor vending machines.  
(CB-10-2001; CB-42-2003)**

**Comment:** No details about future tenants have been provided with this DSP. However, according to the applicant, the hours of operation or deliveries for the first-floor stores will follow the normal schedule of the existing business establishments nearby. Since all activities will be concentrated around the site's two street frontages, the impact of the proposed development on the adjacent properties and the surrounding neighborhood would be minimal.

- b. The subject site is split zoned with a portion of the site in the R-55 Zone. The sector plan retained the portion of the site in the R-55 Zone due to a lack of development proposals. Even though a public building (a public garage in this case) is a permitted use in the R-55 Zone, the development standards of the R-55 Zone such as yard setbacks and lot coverage would not permit the development of this project. The applicant has requested variances from the development standards.

Section 27-548.25 (e) provides that if a use would normally require a variance or departure, separate application shall not be required, but the Planning Board shall find in its approval of the site plan that the variance or departure conforms to all applicable development district standards. In the justification statement, the applicant notes that a portion of the garage will be constructed on two lots (Lot 13 and 14) zoned R-55. The R 55 regulations regarding size of lot, setbacks and other improvements are as follows:

R-55 ZONE REGULATIONS	Required	Provided
Net Lot Area (Minimum in square feet)	6,500	25,700
Lot Frontage at Front Street Line (Minimum in feet)	45	110
Lot Coverage (Maximum % of net lot area)	60	80*
Setbacks (Minimum in feet)		
From street	49	1*†
Side setbacks	29/20	15*
Rear yard setbacks	20	1-18*
Building Height (Maximum in feet, Main Building)	120 (public and quasi-public buildings)	59

**Note:** \*The proposed building straddles four lots. Only two lots are within the R-55 Zone. The measurements were taken from the only parts of the building located in the R-55 Zone.

† Build-to line requirement supersedes the front yard requirement in the R-55 Zone. A variance from the front yard requirement is not required.

As discussed previously, the sector plan retained the two lots in question in the R 55 Zone because there was no development proposal at the time of sector plan preparation. The sector plan also acknowledged that the lack of large land assemblages is one of the primary barriers to any infill development within the US 1 Corridor. The DDOZ Standard S2 specifically notes that parking garages with compatible uses should be considered as part of a mixed-use development. This proposal assembles four small lots and designs the project as one. Given the size of the site and the proposed uses, strict application of the R-55 regulations would make the project impossible. The land use vision for Area 1 is to achieve a compact mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly town center environment. The sector plan calls for the use of parking garages to meet the parking demand. The proposed development is consistent with the land use vision in that it provides a traditional main street environment along the entire frontage of Knox Road and a portion of Yale Avenue with sidewalks and first floor storefronts. All the parking will be in the parking garage. No surface parking has been proposed in this DSP. The variances from maximum lot coverage and minimum yard setbacks as included in this DSP meet the intent of the sector plan for this area and the applicable DDOZ standards in general for the town center.

The applicant also has requested a variance from Section 27-563 Connection to Street, which states that every parking lot shall be connected to a street by means of a driveway. This driveway (except those provided for, and on the same lot with, one-family dwellings) shall be at least eleven feet wide for each lane, exclusive of curb return and gutters. In the case of a corner lot, no driveway shall be located less than twenty feet from the existing or proposed ultimate point of curvature of the curb or the edge of the pavement of an uncurbed section (whichever forms the greater distance to the point of curvature of the fillet of the driveway apron). (See Figure 60, Part 2.) The parking section of this DSP will be accessed from Yale Avenue via a 20-foot wide entrance with two-way traffic. The applicant believes that the width of the driveway in each direction is only 10 feet, which is one foot short of the width requirement of Section 27-563. As a result, the applicant has requested a one-foot variance, citing the modular structure (based on a 10-foot column distance) of the parking garage as the main reason. Staff believes that access to the proposed parking garage is different from that defined in Section 27-563. The proposed 20-foot-wide access to the parking garage from Yale Avenue is sufficient.

- c. The subject application is located within the Aviation Policy Area (APA) 6 of the College Park Airport as defined in Section 27-548.35.

The applicable regulations regarding APA 6 are discussed as follows:

#### **Section 27-548.42. Height requirements**

- (a) **Except as necessary and incidental to airport operations, no building, structure, or natural feature shall be constructed, altered, maintained, or allowed to grow so as to project or otherwise**

**penetrate the airspace surfaces defined by Federal Aviation Regulation Part 77 or the Code of Maryland, COMAR 11.03.05, Obstruction of Air Navigation.**

- (b) In APA-4 and APA-6, no building permit may be approved for a structure higher than fifty (50) feet unless the applicant demonstrates compliance with FAR Part 77.**

**Comment:** The subject application proposes a four-story, five-level mixed-use parking garage with part of the first floor occupied by storefronts for frontage along Knox Road and a small portion around the intersection of Knox Road and Yale Avenue. The total height of the proposed building is 59 feet, which is nine feet above the maximum allowed height. The applicant has requested a waiver from the Maryland Aviation Authority. A condition has been proposed to require the applicant to obtain approval from MAA prior to certification of this DSP.

- d. Section 27-548.25 (b) requires that the Planning Board shall find that the site plan meets applicable development district standards in order to approve a detailed site plan. As discussed in the above Finding 7, this DSP complies with the applicable DDOZ standards except those for which amendments have been requested. Staff recommends approval of those alternative development standards because the alternative development district standards will benefit the development as well as the development district and will not substantially impair implementation of the sector plan.

9. ***Landscape Manual:*** The 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* and the standards of the Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) have modified the applicable sections of the *Landscape Manual*. In this case, the site plan is subject to buffering incompatible uses requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.

Development District Overlay Zone Standards, Site Design, S4, Buffers and Screening, Design Standards E, allows a 50 percent reduction of bufferyard requirements, in terms of the width of the bufferyard and the number of the planting units, in order to facilitate a compact form of development compatible with the urban character of the US 1 Corridor. The subject DSP has one boundary area adjacent to an existing multifamily building that needs to be buffered in accordance with the *Landscape Manual* because the proposed development is defined as a medium impact use, and when a medium impact use is adjacent to a multifamily use, a Type B bufferyard is required. A Type B bufferyard requires a minimum 30-foot building setback and a minimum 20-foot-wide landscaped yard to be planted with 80 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. According to Site Design S4 Design Standard E, the minimum building setback can be reduced to 15 feet, the minimum width of the landscape yard can be reduced to 10 feet, and the plant unit number can be reduced to 40 units per 100 linear feet of property line. The landscape plan shows a 10-foot-wide landscape strip. However, only a 14-foot building setback has been provided for the most of the boundary area. An emergency stairwell projects approximately five feet out of the southern elevation plane. The applicant has requested an amendment to the applicable DDOZ standards (see above Finding 7 for a detailed discussion). However, the Landscape Plan neither graphically delineates the Section 4.7 bufferyard, nor does it identify the Section 4.7 schedule. A condition has been proposed in the recommendation section of this report to require the applicant to show graphically the Section 4.7 bufferyard and clearly label the corresponding schedule on the Landscape Plan prior to certification.

10. **The Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance:** This property is not subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation and Tree Preservation Ordinance because the site is less than 40,000 square feet, has no existing woodland on site, and has no previously approved Tree Conservation Plan.
11. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:
  - a. The Community Planning Division, in a memorandum dated November 20, 2007, indicated that the application is consistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for Corridors in the Developed Tier, and conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2002 *Approved College Park US 1 Corridor Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* for structured parking, compact development and a vertical mix of uses. The community planner also noted that the subject site is located under the traffic pattern for a small general aviation airport (College Park Airport) and is subject to Aviation Policy regulations in Sections 27-548.32 through 548.48 of the Zoning Ordinance. See above Finding 8 for the subject's conformance with the noted regulations.
  - b. The Transportation Planning Section in a memorandum dated January 4, 2008, concluded that the existing transportation facilities would be adequate to serve the proposed development. The Transportation Planning Section recommends approval of this DSP with two conditions that have been incorporated into the recommendation section of this report.

In a separate memorandum from the Transportation Planning Section dated December 20, 2007, on detailed site plan review for master plan trail compliance, the trails planner provided a comprehensive review of the trail-related development district overlay zone standards that are applicable to this DSP. The trails planner recommends four conditions that have been incorporated into the recommendation section of this report.
  - c. In a memorandum dated January 10, 2008, the Subdivision Section stated that since the property is owned and used by the City of College Park, it is exempt from the preliminary plan requirements in accordance with Section 24-107(c)(5) of the Subdivision Regulations.
  - d. In a memorandum dated November 16, 2007, the Permit Section provided 17 comments and questions regarding the subject DSP's compliance with the sector plan and development district standards, signage, building setback, parking, loading, building height, etc. Most of the questions have been answered. Two outstanding items regarding lighting and a retaining wall have been incorporated into conditions of approval in the recommendation section of this report
  - e. The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) has not made any comments on the stormwater management of this site.

**Comment:** The subject DSP has Approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 29492-2007-00. A condition has been proposed in the recommendation section of this report to require the applicant to provide approval evidence from DPW&T prior to certification.



- f. At the time this staff report was written, the Cities of University Park, Riverdale, and Hyattsville had not yet responded to the referral request.
12. As required by Section 27-285 (b) and Section 27-548.25, the detailed site plan represents a reasonable alternative for satisfying the site design guidelines of Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9, of the Prince George’s County Code without requiring unreasonable cost and without detracting substantially from the utility of the proposed development for its intended use and the site plan in general meets applicable development district overlay zone standards.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and recommends APPROVAL of the application as follows:

- 1. Staff recommends APPROVAL of the alternative development district standards for:
  - a. P4. Street Trees A. (to allow no street trees to be provided along the site’s frontage on Yale Avenue).  
  
P4. Street Trees B (to allow the distance between the proposed street trees to be increased to 42 feet on center along the site’s Knox Road frontage).  
  
P4. Street Trees F (to allow the width of the planting area to be reduced to four feet on the condition that the tree planting areas below the sidewalk paving are connected so that root zone space for trees can be shared).
  - b. P6. Utilities, A (to allow the applicant to retain one existing utility pole at the current location without relocating underground).
  - c. S2. Parking Areas, C ( to allow the application to follow modified DDOZ landscape standards).  
  
S2. Parking Areas, N (to allow the proposed parking garage to exceed the height of adjacent buildings).
  - d. S4. Buffers and Screening, A (to allow the application of a masonry wall with a metal door to screen the dumpster and utility area).  
  
S4. Buffers and Screening, E (to allow a 14-foot building setback and an emergency stairwell to be five feet further into the 14-foot building setback within the southern boundary area).
  - e. S5. Freestanding Signs, K ( to allow only the size of the sign-face area and location of the tenant signs to be approved with this DSP).
  - f. B 1. Height, Scale, Massing and Size. A (to allow the height of the proposed building to vary more than 15 percent relative to the average height in the area).

B1. Height, Scale, Massing and Size, J (to allow a free standing service area as proposed on the site plan).

g. B6. Building Services, F (to allow a door opening on a brick screening wall toward Knox Road).

2. Staff recommends APPROVAL of DSP-07040, for the City of College Park Public Parking Garage, subject to the following conditions:

a. Prior to certificate approval of this detailed site plan, the applicant shall:

- (1) Remove two proposed blade signs to reduce the total number of projecting signs to two.
- (2) Provide a well-marked or contrasting crosswalk where the sidewalk crosses the ingress/egress to the parking garage along Yale Avenue, unless modified by the City of College Park.
- (3) Provide a wide sidewalk along the subject site's entire frontage of Knox Road. This sidewalk shall extend from the curb edge to the building face.
- (4) Provide a wide sidewalk along the subject site's entire frontage of Yale Avenue. This sidewalk shall extend from the curb edge to the building face.
- (5) Provide a minimum of 15 bicycle parking spaces (bicycle rack(s) and/or lockers).
- (6) Revise the landscape plan to graphically show the Section 4.7 bufferyard on the plan and label the corresponding landscape schedule.
- (7) Provide evidence that the subject DSP is consistent with the approved stormwater management concept plan for this site.
- (8) Provide written evidence from the governing agencies that the development is in compliance with FAR Part 77.
- (9) Provide a sight-tight door for the dumpster and transformer compound to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.
- (10) Provide lighting fixture details to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Design Section as the designee of the Planning Board.
- (11) Revise the screening wall material to be the same brick pattern as that of the building.
- (12) Either revise the justification statement to include no on-street parking on Knox Road and Yale Avenue or to provide on-street parking on the two streets.
- (13) Provide a direct pedestrian walkway from the garage to Knox Road and extend the same sidewalk treatment along Knox Road to its intersection with Baltimore Avenue.

- (14) Provide a planting detail to show that the tree planting area below the sidewalk pavement is connected.