



Note: Staff reports can be accessed at www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm.

Revision of Site Plan

ROSP-3307/10

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Doctors Community Hospital Location: North side of Good Luck Road, approximately 100 feet east of its intersection with Hanover Parkway Applicant/Address: Doctors Hospital Inc. 8118 Good Luck Road Lanham, MD 20706 Owner/Address: Same as above	Date Accepted:	04/07/2009
	Planning Board Action Limit:	N/A
	Plan Acreage:	33.4 acres
	Zone:	R-80
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
	Gross Floor Area:	310,000 sq. ft.
	Planning Area:	67
	Tier:	Developing
	Council District:	03
	Election District:	21
	Municipality:	N/A
	200-Scale Base Map:	209NE07

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
Revision of site plan to add 31 new directional signs and two new entrance signs.	Informational Mailing:	11/25/2008
	Acceptance Mailing:	04/09/2009
	Sign Posting Deadline:	05/18/2009

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Jimi Jones	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

June 4, 2009

TO: The Prince George's County Planning Board
The Prince George's County District Council

FROM: Jimi Jones, Zoning Supervisor

SUBJECT: **Revision of Site Plan Application No. SE-3307/10**

REQUEST: **Addition of 31 new directional signs and two new entrance signs**

RECOMMENDATION: **Approval with conditions**

NOTE:

The Planning Board has scheduled this application for a public hearing on June 18, 2009. 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.

FINDINGS:

- A. **Location and Field Inspection:** The subject property is located on the north side of Good Luck Road, approximately 100 feet east of its intersection with Hanover Parkway. The subject property is an irregularly-shaped parcel situated in the midst of an established residential community. The topography contains steep slopes and generally slopes downgrade to Good Luck Road. The highest elevation is reached at approximately the site of the hospital and slopes slightly downgrade toward the rear (north). The property is improved with a 274-bed, 240,280-square-foot hospital, a 7,500-square-foot medical building directly north of the hospital, a 167-bed nursing home south of the hospital, staff housing consisting of 18 two-bedroom and ten one-bedroom apartments adjacent to the east boundary, and an 1,800-square-foot MRI building. A recently constructed parking garage and additional surface parking lots are located adjacent to the above-described uses. Also, there is an existing 910-square-foot house and a 960-square-foot shed in proximity to Mallery Drive, set back 205 and 217 feet, respectively, from the south boundary adjacent to Good Luck Road. Another single-family detached dwelling and associated grounds are located in the eastern portion of the site and are not part of this application. The remainder of the site contains landscaping and woodlands.
- B. **History:** The subject property was classified in the R-80 (One-Family Detached Residential) Zone by adoption of the 1990 *Approved Master Plan for Langley Park-College Park-Greenbelt and Vicinity and Adopted Sectional Map Amendment for Planning Areas 65, 66, and 67*. Special Exception SE-730 approved June 14, 1962, allowed the construction of a 104-bed nursing home on 5.3 acres (Lot 4 of Magnolia Springs). Special Exception SE-1120, approved November 8, 1965, allowed the applicant to establish a 200-bed proprietary hospital with associated required off-street parking. A revised site plan for Special Exception SE-1120 was approved January 5, 1978 to permit the construction of additions to the emergency, operating, and boiler rooms for a total of 7,298.8 square feet.

Special Exception SE-3117 (September 11, 1978) was a request for an enlargement of Special Exception SE-1120. The requested use was for a 100-bed addition to the hospital, a 63-bed addition to the nursing home, additions to the laundry and hospital offices, a staff nursery, an ambulatory care center, a parking structure, and a 100,000-square-foot medical office building. The hospital and nursing office space was approved; however, the staff nursery, ambulatory care center, and the medical office building were denied.

On December 4, 1980, a minor change application was approved by the Planning Board permitting a 37,000-square-foot addition for office space, subject to a condition that the site plan be amended to delete 16 parking spaces along the eastern side of the existing driveway.

On December 1, 1981, the District Council approved Special Exception SE-3307, a request to convert the previously approved 24-acre hospital to a health campus in accordance with Section 27-362(c) of the Zoning Ordinance. That action also approved the addition of 7,400 square feet of office space, a 11,200-square-foot addition to the west end of the hospital, and 38 staff housing units.

On April 7, 1982, the District Council approved a revision to SE-3307, adding five acres to the health campus. No additional improvements were proposed at that time.

On June 10, 1985, the District Council approved a request to construct a 960-square-foot storage shed (existing), which was intended to replace an assortment of smaller sheds. The Council also approved a request to relocate 101 parking spaces to the north of the office addition and a correction to the site plan to illustrate the location of an existing single-family dwelling on Mallery Drive.

On March 9, 1987, the District Council approved a request to revise the site plan to construct a freestanding, 1,800-square-foot, one-story medical building in the southeastern portion of the site.

On January 24, 1994, the District Council approved a Revision of Site Plan (ROSP-3307/4, Zoning Ordinance No. 6-1994), for these purposes: to add a four-story, 44,000-square-foot addition to the northwest corner of the existing hospital, to house a main lobby, an outpatient physical therapy wing, a surgery suite, an emergency department, and pre- and post-surgery care units, plus 20 more emergency room parking spaces, one more loading space, as well as a redesigned parking lot.

On January 9, 1997, the District Council approved a Revision of Site Plan (ROSP-3307/5) to enlarge the hospital building to provide 24 additional beds in the ICU, and eliminate 24 standard beds and reduce the medical office space.

On January 13, 2000, the District Council approved a Revision of Site Plan (ROSP-3307/06) for conversion of an existing parking garage to an emergency department and for the provision of 16 additional parking spaces.

In May 2003, the Planning Director approved a Revision of Site Plan (ROSP-3307/07) for a 98,000-square-foot medical office building, a four-level, 370-space parking deck, and a 115-space surface parking lot. This application was approved under the optional review method.

On January 20, 2006, a limited minor change (ROSP-3307/08) was approved by the Planning Director to permit the addition of a 192-square-foot pavilion and a 233-square-foot storage room to the existing nursing home.

In May 2007 the Planning Board approved a Revision of Site Plan (ROSP-3307/09) which permitted four adjoining additions to the main hospital building. These additions were designed to modernize the core area of the hospital by constructing additional floors on top of existing structures, and adding new floor area on unimproved ground within the “squared-off” area encompassing the main hospital building on its eastern side. At this time, the Board also approved the modification of the formerly approved, unconstructed parking lot located in the southeastern corner of the property, a connector drive to improve the circulation between two existing parking areas, eliminating a dead end situation, and a new 89-space parking lot on the north end of the campus.

- C. **Master Plan Recommendation:** The master plan for Langley Park-College Park-Greenbelt recommends public or quasi-public use for the subject property, in recognition of its current use as a health campus.
- D. **Request:** The applicant is proposing a new sign plan for the existing hospital. The addition of new entrance signs and directional signs requires a revision to the special exception site plan.

E. **Surrounding Uses:** The property is surrounded by the following uses:

North—Across Brae Brook Drive is a Potomac Electric and Power Company (PEPCO) right-of-way and single-family homes in the R-55 (One-Family Detached Residential) Zone.

East—The Magnolia Elementary School and Magnolia Spring subdivision with single-family detached homes in the R-80 Zone. Across Mallery Drive is a church in the R-80 Zone.

South—Across Good Luck Road is Washington Bible College in the R-80 Zone.

West—A PEPCO right-of-way in the R-R (Rural Residential) Zone, undeveloped woodland, and the Dresden Green subdivision with single-family detached homes in the R-55 Zone.

F. **Specific Special Exception Requirements:** Section 27-362(a)(2)(H) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that:

Regulations restricting location, height, coverage, density, frontage, and yards, of buildings and structures, as specified for the zone in which such campus is located, shall not apply to uses or structures provided for in this Section. The dimensions and percentages shown on the approved site plan shall constitute the regulations for development under a given Special Exception.

Amendments to an approved special exception site plan for a health campus is governed by Section 27-362(a)(6)(A) which provides that:

(A) **Notwithstanding other provisions of this Subtitle concerning revision of site plans, requests to amend a site plan for a health campus shall only be approved by the Planning Board under paragraph 27-362(a)(7) or the District Council under this paragraph 27-362(a)(6). The Planning Board is authorized to grant minor changes to site plans for health campuses, subject to appeal to the District Council. Such amendments to site plans may be permitted provided that any of the following three (3) situations exists:**

(i) **Situation No. 1.**

(aa) **There is a proposed increase in gross floor area of a building or in land area covered by a structure other than a building (over that approved on the original or amended site plan) which is not greater than ten percent (10%) of the gross floor area or covered land area or 500 square feet, whichever is less (see Figure 40), except as provided in (iii) below; or**

(bb) **There is a proposed relocation (in any direction) of any improvement (approved on the original or amended plan) which is not greater than ten percent (10%) of the distance to the boundary line of the special exception or twenty (20) feet, whichever is less (see Figure 41).**

- (ii) **Situation No. 2.**
 - (aa) **There is a proposed expansion or addition of a parking lot or parking garage; or**
 - (bb) **There is a proposed change in a landscape plan.**
- (iii) **Situation No. 3.**
 - (aa) **There is a proposed increase in gross floor area of the hospital for an addition to the emergency room only; and**
 - (bb) **There is a proposed relocation of the existing helipad of less than 150 feet to accommodate the addition described in (aa).**

The proposed additional signs are structures which will cover less than one percent of the covered land area.

G. **Section 27-317 Required Findings:** Section 27-317(a) of the Zoning Ordinance indicates that the following findings must be made before a special exception amendment may be approved:

- (1) **The proposed use and site plan are in harmony with the purpose of this Subtitle;**

Comment: The District Council, in approving SE-3307 in December of 1981 found that the health campus is in harmony with the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed use of the property is unchanged and continues to be in harmony with the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.

- (2) **The proposed use is in conformance with all the applicable requirements and regulations of this Subtitle;**

Comment: With the proposed conditions of approval, the proposed use is in conformance with all of the applicable requirements and regulations of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant has submitted a sign plan which amends the sizes and locations of signs originally approved. The new sign area, height, and setbacks are set forth in the applicant's exhibit entitled "Exterior Signage Campus Master Plan" (January 2009). Staff notes that the two proposed entrance signs are located within the proposed right-of-way of Good Luck Road. Placement of such structures within a right-of-way requires permission from the District Council. A condition of approval requiring the applicant to obtain such approval is included in staff's recommendation.

- (3) **The proposed use will not substantially impair the integrity of any validly approved Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, or, in the absence of a Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, the General Plan;**

Comment: The proposed use of the property remains unchanged and will not substantially impair the integrity of the approved master plan for Langley Park-College Park-Greenbelt and vicinity, dated October 1989. The proposed improvements to the

existing health campus will improve visibility of the entrances and traffic patterns at the hospital thereby improving public safety and convenience.

- (4) The proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of residents or workers in the area;**

Comment: The proposed improvements to the health campus will not adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of County residents or workers in the area. Rather, the proposed improvements will add to the convenience and safety of staff, patients, and visitors.

- (5) The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood; and**

Comment: The improved signage will not be detrimental to the use or development of the adjacent properties or the general neighborhood. No sign will impact an adjoining property.

- (6) The proposed site plan is in conformance with an approved Tree Conservation Plan.**

Comment: A Type II tree conservation plan was prepared for the site and the site plan is in conformance with that plan.

H. **Section 27-362 Specific Requirements for a Health Campus:** The subject application is also in conformance with Section 27-362(a)(2) of the Zoning Ordinance, as discussed below.

- (A) The subject property shall contain at least twenty-five (25) contiguous acres, except as provided in paragraph (5) below;**

Comment: The entire property covered by the special exception contains 33.4856 acres, which is in excess of the minimum requirement.

- (B) The subject property shall have frontage on, and direct vehicular access to, a street with sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic generated by the campus;**

Comment: The subject property has frontage on and direct vehicular access to Good Luck Road, a master plan collector, and on Mallery Drive. The addition of the proposed signage will generate no additional traffic on nearby roads.

- (C) All buildings and structures shall be located at least:**

- (i) Fifty (50) feet from all adjoining property lines (except street lines); and**

- (ii) Twenty-five (25) feet from all adjoining street lines;**

Comment: All buildings and structures, other than the entrance signs, are located at least 50 feet from adjoining property lines and 25 feet from all adjoining street lines, with the exception of the hospital building (Building A), which is set back 42 feet and the

proposed staff housing (Building J), which is set back 40 feet, as provided by variances approved by the District Council (Zoning Ordinance No. 6-1994). The proposed entrance signs will be located within the planned future right-of-way of Good Luck Road; however, the applicant is willing to relocate them when Good Luck Road is widened.

- (D) All off-street parking and loading facilities shall be located at least:**
- (i) Fifty (50) feet from any adjoining land in a Residential Zone, or land proposed to be used for residential purposes on an approved Basic Plan for a Comprehensive Design Zone, approved Official Plan for an R-P-C Zone, or any approved Conceptual or Detailed Site Plan;**
 - (ii) Six (6) feet from any adjoining street; and**
 - (iii) Ten (10) feet from any other land than that in (i) and (ii), above;**

Comment: All existing off-street parking and loading facilities are located at least ten feet from an adjoining street and 50 feet from adjoining land in a residential zone, with the exception of the ten-foot setback provided along the western property line of the Ripley property. A variance was approved by the District Council to allow this exception (Zoning Ordinance No. 6-1994).

- (E) All of the parking and loading needs of employees and residents of, and visitors and delivery services to, the site shall be met on the subject property;**

Comment: A total of 1,169 parking spaces are provided, in excess of the 1,026 spaces required; five loading spaces are provided as required.

- (F) All perimeter setback areas of the site shall be buffered or screened in accordance with the provisions of the Landscape Manual. The applicant shall demonstrate that the required buffer yards will provide reasonable sight and sound barriers;**

Comment: The plan is in conformance with the provisions of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*, including the granting of alternative compliance by the District Council (Zoning Ordinance No. 6-1994) for Bufferyard 1, reducing the required 40-foot width to ten feet.

- (G) Not less than forty percent (40%) of the site shall be devoted to green area; and**

Comment: A total of 59.3 percent of the entire property covered by the special exception is devoted to green area, which is more than the minimum 40 percent required. The proposed signage will not increase lot coverage as the signs are located on areas which are already paved.

- (H) **Regulations restricting location, height, coverage, density, frontage, and yards, of buildings and structures, as specified for the zone in which such campus is located, shall not apply to uses or structures provided for in this Section. The dimensions and percentages shown on the approved site plan shall constitute the regulations for development under a given Special Exception.**
- (I) **Notwithstanding Section 27-118.01, more than one (1) building may be located on a lot containing a one-family dwelling.**

Comment: The applicant is aware of and has observed these provisions.

CONCLUSION

There are only three health campuses in Prince George's County serving almost a million people. They are an important resource to our community and contribute to the public welfare in obvious ways. It would arguably be wiser and safer to permit an "emergency room" directional sign that was slightly larger than standard directional signs than to require a sign which may not be clearly understood in a life threatening emergency. Directional signs and entrance signs around a hospital require a unique consideration and the signs must be visible to save lives.

Staff agrees with the applicant's assertion that the proposed signage will improve traffic flow and safety at the health campus. The new signs will have no new impact on the surrounding neighborhood which has co-existed with this hospital at its center for over 30 years. The proposed signage will improve traffic flow and safety at the health campus and this application meets the criteria for approval. Staff therefore recommends that Revision of Site Plan ROSP-3307/10 be **APPROVED** subject to a condition requiring the applicant to obtain approval from the District Council to locate two entrance signs within the right-of-way of Good Luck Road.