The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department
Development Review Division
301-952-3530

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

Detailed Site Plan DSP-11028
Alternative Compliance AC-12001

Application	**General Data**	
Project Name: Ritchie Station Self Storage	Planning Board Hearing Date:	03/08/12
	Staff Report Date:	02/24/12
Location: The southwest corner of the intersection of Walker Mill Road and Ritchie Station Court.	Date Accepted:	12/29/11
	Planning Board Action Limit:	03/13/12
	Plan Acreage:	1.69
Applicant/Address: Ritchie Station Self Storage, LLC. 1930 Isaac Newton Square West, Suite 207 Reston, VA 20190	Zone:	I-1 / C-S-C
	Dwelling Units:	N/A
	Gross Floor Area:	104,400 sq. ft.
	Planning Area:	75A
	Tier:	Developed
	Council District:	06
	Election District	13
	Municipality:	N/A
	200-Scale Base Map:	202SE08

Purpose of Application	**Notice Dates**	
A 104,400-square-foot consolidated storage building. Variance from Section 27-475.04(a)(1)(A)	Informational Mailing:	10/18/11
	Acceptance Mailing:	12/16/11
	Sign Posting Deadline:	03/07/12

Staff Recommendation			**Staff Reviewer:** Jill Kosack **Phone Number:** 301-952-4689 **E-mail:** Jill.Kosack@ppd.mncppc.org
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-11028
Alternative Compliance AC-12001
Ritchie Station Self Storage

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

EVALUATION

The detailed site plan (DSP) was reviewed and evaluated for conformance with the following criteria:

a. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the Light Industrial (I-1) Zone.

b. The requirements of Section 27-230 of the Zoning Ordinance regarding criteria for granting variances.

c. The requirements of Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-11014.

d. The requirements of the *Prince George's County Landscape Manual.*

e. The requirements of the Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance.

f. The requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance.

g. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

Based upon the analysis of the subject detailed site plan, the Urban Design Section recommends the following findings:

1. **Request:** The subject application is for approval of a 104,400-square-foot, three-story, consolidated storage building with 947 units within the I-1-zoned portion of a split-zoned property.

2. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone(s)	I-1/C-S-C	I-1/C-S-C
Use(s)	Vacant	Consolidated Storage
Acreage	1.69	1.69
Parcels	1	1
Building square footage/GFA	0	104,400

Other Development Data:

Parking Required	**26 spaces**
Storage Units—947 units @ 1 space per 50 units	19 spaces
Office Space—1,160 sq. ft. @ 4 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft.	5 spaces
Resident Manager—1 manager @ 2 spaces per manager	2 spaces
Parking Provided	**26 spaces**
Standard Spaces	20 spaces
Compact Spaces	4 spaces
Van-Accessible ADA Spaces	2 spaces
Loading Spaces Required	**5 spaces**
104,400 sq. ft. @ 2 spaces for first 10,000 sq. ft. + 1 space per 40,000 sq. ft. thereafter	
Loading Spaces Provided	**5 spaces**

3. **Location:** The subject property is known as proposed Parcel 1, located south of Walker Mill Road between Ritchie Spur Road and Ritchie Station Court, in Planning Area 75A in Council District 6.

4. **Surrounding Uses:** The subject property is bounded to the northeast by the public right-of-way of Walker Mill Road and beyond it by a gas station in the I-1-zoned Steeplechase Business Park, which is under development per Detailed Site Plan DSP-05044; to the west by the public right-of-way of Ritchie Spur Road and beyond it by a warehouse in the I-1 Zone; to the south by the Ritchie Station Marketplace Shopping Center, zoned Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C), which is under development per Detailed Site Plan DSP-04080; and to the east by the public right-of-way of Ritchie Station Court and beyond it by another portion of the Ritchie Station Marketplace Shopping Center.

5. **Previous Approvals:** Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-11014 was approved for one parcel on 1.69 acres and the resolution (PGCPB No. 11-108) was adopted on December 8, 2011. The one proposed parcel, Parcel 1, combines existing Parcel 24 with a portion of Old Ritchie Marlboro Road, which was vacated by quit claim deed recorded in Liber 32572 Folio 181 by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T). The 2010 *Approved Subregion 4 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* retained the property in the I-1 Zoning District.

6. **Design Features:** The applicant proposes to develop a 36-foot-high, three-story, 104,400-square-foot, roughly rectangular, consolidated storage building with 947 storage units on proposed Parcel 1. The building is placed in the middle of the site, fully within the I-1-zoned portion of the site, set back approximately 25 feet from each of the three public rights-of-way to the northwest, northeast, and east. The C-S-C-zoned portion of the site is a small sliver that runs along the southern edge of the property and will contain only a portion of the access drive, landscaping, and fencing.

Two driveway entrances service the small, 31-space vehicle and truck parking area along the southern end of the site, behind the building. The first two-way entrance drive is located in the southwestern corner of the site, with access from Ritchie Spur Road, and the second runs off the southeastern corner of the property, onto adjacent Parcel 11, before intersecting with Ritchie Station Court. This off-site entrance drive is located within an existing access easement on Parcel 11, recorded at Liber 33033 Folio 376. Both drives are blocked with 6- to 8-foot-high, black, ornamental gates with adjacent keypads in order to control access to the rear of the building. These gates connect to lengths of fence that end at the building to the north and the off-site retaining wall to the south, fully enclosing and securing the rear of the building and parking area. However, the main office for the storage use is located in the southeastern corner of the building with six parking spaces located nearby, outside the gated area, for new customers. The proposed terracotta concrete block trash enclosure is located in the southwestern corner of the site. Stormwater from the site is proposed to be treated in both an off-site pond and on-site underground storm structures.

The proposed consolidated storage building is a typical franchise-scale three-story building with a flat roof and few windows or doors. The exterior will be finished with a combination of terracotta split-face concrete block, cream concrete block accents, white, cream, yellow, and green exterior finishing system (EIFS), and green metal trim. The front elevation of the building facing Walker Mill Road features a balanced, three-part design, with the ends being fully finished in terracotta block along with a decorative arrangement of cream blocks and EIFS and a small section of hipped, green, metal standing seam roof. The middle portion of the front façade consists of terracotta blocks with some cream blocks along approximately the bottom two-thirds, green, metal storefront windows at mid-level, and then a pattern of EIFS colors along the top of the building, including a green and yellow stripe. The eastern elevation which faces Ritchie Station Court is a shorter length that is finished fully in the terracotta block, with cream EIFS and block accents, a green, hipped, metal standing seam roof, large, green, metal storefront windows, and a metal canopy with a green and yellow stripe, similar to that on the front elevation. The western elevation which faces Ritchie Spur Road is faced with terracotta block along the base and then the remainder is finished with a cream-colored metal panel with the same green and yellow stripe painted along the roof line of the flat roof. The rear elevation which faces the parking area and adjacent property to the south has multiple depth changes and is faced mainly in the cream-colored metal panel, with the green and yellow stripe along the roof line of the flat roof. This elevation also has two green metal sliding doors that allow access to the building and 12 separate green, metal, rolling garage doors that offer direct access to individual storage units. All elevations include some integrated building-mounted lighting. Internally illuminated, building-mounted, channel signs in white reading “Storage Zone” with a white and green lock symbol are attached just below the roof on the northeastern and eastern building elevations, facing Walker Mill Road and Ritchie Station Court. The subject DSP does not propose any freestanding signage.

7. **Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for

compliance with the requirements of the I-1 Zone and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.

a. The subject application is in general conformance with the requirements of Section 27-473(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, which governs uses in industrial zones. The proposed consolidated storage building is permitted in the I-1 Zone in accordance with Section 27-475.04, which sets forth additional requirements as follows:

(a) Beginning June 23, 1988, a Detailed Site Plan shall be approved for consolidated storage developments in accordance with Part 3, Division 9, of this Subtitle to insure compliance with the provisions of this Section. Consolidated storage constructed pursuant to a building permit issued prior to this date; consolidated storage for which grading permits were issued prior to this date, subject to Subsection (b); and consolidated storage for which applications for building permits were filed on September 22, 1987, and which are actively pending as of October 25, 1988, subject to Subsection (b), need not meet these requirements.

Comment: The subject DSP application has been submitted in fulfillment of this requirement.

(1) Requirements.

(A) No entrances to individual consolidated storage units shall be visible from a street or from adjoining land in any Residential or Commercial Zone (or land proposed to be used for residential or commercial purposes on an approved Basic Plan for a Comprehensive Design Zone, or any approved Conceptual or Detailed Site Plan).

Comment: No entrances to individual units are visible from the surrounding streets; however, the 12 roll-up doors on the southern building elevation access individual units and are visible from the adjacent C-S-C-zoned Ritchie Station Marketplace property to the south. The applicant has submitted an application for a variance from this requirement for the proposed doors on the southern elevation.

Section 27-230(a) of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the following required findings for approval of a variance:

(1) A specific parcel of land has exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape, exceptional topographic conditions, or other extraordinary situations or conditions;

Applicant's Justification: The applicant provided the following summarized justification in response to this requirement:

"The subject property forms an irregularly shaped triangle situated uniquely very near the base of an existing, approximate, 30-foot retaining wall adjacent to the south that was built as part

of the adjacent Ritchie Station Marketplace Shopping Center.

"The land that actually adjoins the subject property is in a commercial zone and according to Section 27-475.04(a)(1)(A), the entrance doors to the individual storage units must not be visible from the adjoining commercially zoned land.

"There is an exceptional topographic difference between the proposed storage door entrances and the adjoining commercial land. The usable and functional portion of the adjoining shopping center property is located on the other side of the approximately 30-foot-high retaining wall and is [sic] out of sight from the storage entrances as shown on Exhibit 1. Additionally, the portion of the commercial-zoned shopping center property that is below the retaining wall and actually adjoins the subject property is in essence a 'no-man's' land. As described above, this area contains the grading, fence and landscape easement for the retaining wall and is entirely enclosed by security fencing extending from the retaining wall to the self-storage building. Thus, there will never be occasion for anyone associated with the adjoining commercial-zoned shopping center property to be on or within the commercial land between the wall and the subject property. The owner of the adjacent shopping center property is supportive of the applicant's proposed development."

Comment: Staff concurs with the applicant's assertion that there are exceptional topographic conditions, including the extraordinarily tall wall on the adjacent commercially-zoned property. These conditions, with the storage building being located on the low side of the wall, will essentially make the entrances to the individual storage units not visible from the developed portion of the adjacent shopping center, which when developed, will most likely have only parking in the near vicinity of the top of the wall.

(2) The strict application of this Subtitle will result in peculiar and unusual practical difficulties to, or exceptional or undue hardship upon, the owner of the property; and

Applicant's Justification: The applicant provided the following summarized justification in response to this requirement:

"Requiring the entrances to individual storage units to be totally out of sight from adjoining commercial land and roadways would result in unusual and practical difficulties in redesigning the site and would result in an exceptional and undue hardship upon the applicant. The applicant has explored other site layouts and had found them to be economically infeasible, less attractive and innovative as the concept proposed. Access to the site is

controlled by security gates and fencing that isolates the site's ingress and egress so that only those utilizing the facility will have access to the adjoining commercial land. This area is also screened by the fencing and landscaping proposed by the applicant on the subject and adjoining shopping center property."

Comment: Staff concurs with the applicant's assertion that the strict application of the visibility of entrances would result in a practical difficulty of making it nearly impossible to site a consolidated storage building. The site is a small triangle of industrially-zoned property surrounded by public rights-of-way and commercially-zoned land. Therefore, per this requirement, no individual unit entrances could be located on any building elevation. The applicant is already providing a very small percentage of individual unit entrances, 12 entrances with 947 total units proposed, and has placed these in the most inconspicuous place on the site, behind a gate and fence, blocked from view of the adjacent shopping center by a large, existing, retaining wall.

(3) The variance will not substantially impair the intent, purpose, or integrity of the General Plan or Master Plan.

Applicant's Justification: The applicant provided the following summarized justification in response to this requirement:

"The subject property will be developed in accordance with the land use policy recommendations contained in the General Plan and the industrial land use recommended in the 2010 *Approved Subregion 4 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*. The General Plan contains a specific goal and strategy that supports the proposed development on this infill site and the instant variance request. One goal encourages appropriate infill development. The subject property and proposed use is a redevelopment and infill project on land that is properly zoned for industrial use. To accomplish this in the Developed Tier, the General Plan contains a strategy for developing flexible development standards for redevelopment and for revising the Zoning Ordinance to accommodate the development pattern of older communities by removing obstacles to quality infill and redevelopment. The applicant's creative use of existing topographical conditions, alternative landscaping treatments, building layout, extensive use of perimeter shade trees and secure fencing, along with cooperation of the adjacent shopping center land owner to accommodate the proposed infill is supportive of the General Plan goal and strategy.

"The 2010 Approved Subregion 4 Master Plan recommends 'Industrial' land use and retained the property in the existing I-1 and C-S-C zones in order to implement recommendations

discussed in the plan."

Comment: Staff concurs with the applicant's assertion that the variance will not impair the intent, purpose, or integrity of the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan* or the 2010 *Approved Subregion 4 Master Plan and Sectional Map Amendment.*

(B) Entrances to individual consolidated storage units shall be either oriented toward the interior of the development or completely screened from view by a solid wall, with landscaping along the outside thereof.

Comment: All entrances to individual units are either oriented toward the interior of the building or are completely screened from view.

(C) The maximum height shall be thirty-six (36) feet. Structures exceeding this height and approved before January 1, 2000, shall not be considered nonconforming.

Comment: The maximum height of the proposed building is 36 feet at the high point of the flat roof, which meets this requirement.

(b) In order for a consolidated storage for which a grading permit had been issued prior to June 23, 1988, or for which application for a building permit was filed on September 22, 1987, and which is actively pending as of October 25, 1988, to be exempted from the Detailed Site Plan requirement of Subsection (a), the permit application or the attendant site plan must identify the consolidated storage as the proposed use, and the warehouse must comply with paragraph 1 of Subsection (a).

Comment: This requirement does not apply to the subject DSP since it was submitted after June 23, 1988.

b. The DSP shows a site layout that is consistent with Section 27-474, regulations regarding building setbacks. The DSP is also in conformance with the applicable site design guidelines.

c. The signage within the DSP has been reviewed per Section 27-613, which governs signs attached to a building or canopy. The two proposed building-mounted signs are in conformance with the applicable regulations. No proposed freestanding signage was submitted, reviewed, or approved with this DSP application.

8. **Conformance to Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-11014:** Preliminary Plan 4-11014 was approved and the resolution (PGCPB No. 11-108) was adopted on December 8, 2011. The Planning Board approved the preliminary plan with 12 conditions, of which the following are applicable to the review of this detailed site plan and warrant discussion as follows:

2. Prior to approval of building permits, a limited detailed site plan shall be approved by the Planning Board or its designee, to address the following:

a. Architectural elevations for all proposed buildings and other architectural elements such as walls and fences, which shall be compatible in design, color, materials, and quality to the adjacent Ritchie Station Marketplace shopping center.

b. The relationship between the site's frontage design along Ritchie Station Court, including but not limited to, building location, landscaping and sight lines, and the existing Ritchie Station Marketplace, including the brick wall entrance feature.

Comment: The applicant has submitted the subject DSP for consolidated storage as required pursuant to Section 27-475.04 of the Zoning Ordinance to be approved in accordance with Part 3, Division 9. As part of this submittal, the applicant included full architectural elevations which show a building that is compatible in design, color, and materials with the adjacent Ritchie Station Marketplace. Additionally, the applicant submitted exhibits demonstrating the site's frontage design and its relationship to the brick wall entrance feature for Ritchie Station Marketplace, which is acceptable.

3. Development of this site shall be in conformance with Stormwater Management Concept Plan 14459-2009-01, and any subsequent revisions.

Comment: DPW&T confirmed that the proposed DSP conforms to approved stormwater Management Concept Plan 14459-2009.

4. At the time of final plat approval, the applicant shall dedicate right-of-way along Walker Mill Road of no more than an additional eight feet from the existing right-of-way line as shown on the approved preliminary plan, or as determined by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T).

Comment: The submitted DSP shows 6.5 feet of proposed right-of-way dedication along Walker Mill Road. The applicant has submitted written comments (Abraham to Novy) from DPW&T that the 6.5 feet of right-of-way dedication along Walker Mill Road is acceptable.

5. The applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall provide the following, subject to modification by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T):

a. Construct an eight-foot-wide concrete sidepath along the entire subject property frontage of Walker Mill Road.

b. Construct a four-foot-wide concrete sidewalk within the existing right-of-way along the entire subject property frontage of Ritchie Spur Road extending from the terminus of the existing concrete sidewalk in a southerly direction towards the southwest corner of the property.

c. Construct a crosswalk across Ritchie Spur Road at the southwest corner of the subject property where the sidewalk terminates, and construct ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) ramps and install pedestrian warning sign assemblies in advance of crossing and/or at the location of the crossing.

Comment: In conformance with this requirement, the submitted DSP proposes a six-foot-wide

concrete sidewalk along the entire frontage of Walker Mill Road, a five-foot-wide sidewalk along Ritchie Spur Road towards the southwest corner of the property, and a crosswalk across Ritchie Spur Road with ADA (Americans With Disabilities Act) ramps and warning strips. Based on written comments (Abraham to Novy) from DPW&T, the proposed sidewalk widths are acceptable.

6. At the time of final plat approval, the applicant shall dedicate a ten-foot-wide public utility easement (PUE) along the public rights-of-way as delineated on the approved preliminary plan of subdivision.

Comment: The submitted DSP shows the ten-foot-wide public utility easement along all the public rights-of-way as delineated on the approved preliminary plan of subdivision.

7. At the time of final plat approval, the applicant shall dedicate right-of-way of no more than an additional ten feet along the frontage of Ritchie Spur Road as shown on the approved preliminary plan, or as determined by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T).

Comment: The submitted DSP shows ten feet of proposed dedication along the right-of-way of Ritchie Spur Road as shown on the approved preliminary plan.

8. Prior to approval of building permits, the applicant shall demonstrate to DPW&T that adequate sight distance and turning radii at all access and egress points to the subject development are provided. This may include:

a. Modification of the existing median along Ritchie Road Spur, as needed, to accommodate vehicles making a left turn from the subject site.

b. Modification of the curb radius at the corner of eastbound Walker Mill Road and Ritchie Road Spur to provide adequate turning radius to accommodate trucks accessing the site from Ritchie Road Spur.

Comment: This condition requires that identified safety/operational issues be examined and corrected by the applicant prior to building permit. This condition is enforceable by DPW&T prior to building permit.

9. Total development within the subject property shall be limited to equivalent development which generates no more than 16 AM peak hour, 27 PM peak hour, and 42 Saturday peak-hour vehicle trips. Any development generating a traffic impact greater than that identified herein shall require a new preliminary plan of subdivision with a new determination of the adequacy of transportation facilities.

Comment: This condition is a trip cap condition limiting uses on the property. The DSP building proposal is identical to that analyzed at the time of preliminary plan; therefore, the uses are consistent with the trip cap.

10. Residential development shall require approval of a new preliminary plan of subdivision prior to approval of any building permits.

Comment: The DSP is proposing a 104,400-square-foot consolidated storage facility for the subject property, which is a nonresidential development. No residential development is being

proposed with this DSP; therefore, a new preliminary plan of subdivision is not required.

11. An automatic fire suppression system shall be provided in all new buildings proposed in this subdivision unless the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department determines that an alternative method of fire suppression is appropriate.

Comment: General Note 40 on the DSP states that the building will utilize an automatic fire suppression system.

12. The final plat shall label the denial of direct access to Walker Mill Road from Parcel 1.

Comment: This condition is enforceable at the time of final plat; however, the DSP should note and label the denial of access on the plan. A condition requiring this has been included in this approval.

9. **Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** The proposed consolidated storage building is subject to Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips along Streets; Section 4.3, Parking Lot Requirements; Section 4.4, Screening Requirements; Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses; and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual.*

a. Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips Along Streets, applies to all public and private road frontages, which would include the eastern, northeastern, and northwestern edges of the subject site. The requirements of Section 4.2 include a minimum 10-foot-wide strip planted with one tree and ten shrubs for every 35 feet of road frontage, excluding driveway openings. The submitted DSP meets this requirement for the eastern, northeastern, and northwestern road frontages.

b. Section 4.3(c)(2), Parking Lot Interior Planting Requirements, requires that a certain percentage of the parking area, in accordance with the size of the parking lot, be interior planting areas with one shade tree for each 300 square feet of planting area. The landscape plan identifies one parking lot of 19,556 square feet, which would be subject to the eight percent requirement because the total parking lot area is between 7,000 and 49,999 square feet. The landscape plan provides 8.9 percent of the total parking lot area in interior planting area and a total of six shade trees, which satisfies the requirements of Section 4.3(c)(2).

Section 4.3(c)(1), Parking Lot Perimeter Landscape Strip Requirements, applies when proposed parking lots are adjacent to a property line, which applies to the southern edge of the subject property. The applicant has requested alternative compliance to Section 4.3(c)(1) for the required parking lot perimeter landscape strip along the southern property line. The findings of the Alternative Compliance Committee are as follows:

The applicant has filed this request for Alternative Compliance from Section 4.3(c)(1) along the southern property line to allow a portion of the required landscape strip and plantings to be located on the adjacent property, Parcels 7 and 11, in order to accommodate the location of the proposed parking area and drive aisle.

REQUIRED: 4.3(c)(1) Parking Lot Perimeter Landscape Strip, along the southern property line.

Length of Landscape Strip	360 feet
Option Selected	1
Width of Landscaped Strip	3 feet
Shade Trees	0
Shrubs	155

PROVIDED: 4.3(c)(1) Parking Lot Perimeter Landscape Strip, along the southern property line.

Length of Landscaped Strip	360 feet
Option Selected	1
Width of Landscaped Strip	Variable, approximately 10 feet to over 30 feet (off-site)
Ornamental Trees	12
Shrubs	95

Justification of Recommendation:
The underlying DSP application proposes a new consolidated storage building. The property is roughly rectangular in shape and is currently vacant, cleared, and graded. It is surrounded on three sides by public roads and by a shopping center site to the south.

The applicant is requesting Alternative Compliance from Section 4.3(c)(1), Parking Lot Perimeter Landscape Strip Requirements, of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*, along the site's southern property line. The applicant chose Option 1 for a landscape strip in the Developed Tier from Section 4.3(c)(1) , which requires a minimum three-foot-wide landscape strip, planted with 15 shrubs per 35 linear feet of parking lot adjacent to a property line. The applicant is requesting approval of a three-foot-wide landscape strip planted with 12 ornamental trees and 95 shrubs, most of which will be located off-site on the adjacent property to the south, Parcels 7 and 11. The applicant argues that a grade difference and an existing large masonry retaining wall near the northern edge of the adjacent property puts the adjacent shopping center development at an elevation more than 15 feet above the proposed parking area on-site. Hence, any proposed perimeter strip will not function as a buffer between the adjacent property and the parking area as intended, but will rather only serve to screen the off-site retaining wall from the on-site parking area. In order to provide the required strip between the two developments, the owner of the adjacent property, Parcels 7 and 11, has agreed to provide an easement on their property for the perimeter strip landscaping, grading, and a fence, which has been recorded at Liber 33033 Folio 363. Therefore, the applicant proposes to provide the required number of plants, in a naturalized planting arrangement that will enhance the appearance of the off-site retaining wall, along with the required landscape strip width off-site, in a recorded easement which will guarantee the future maintenance and existence of the required plantings. The Alternative Compliance Committee finds the applicant's proposed alternative compliance measures to be equally effective as normal compliance with Section 4.3(c)(1) of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual.*

Recommendation:
The Alternative Compliance Committee and the Planning Director recommends APPROVAL of Alternative Compliance for Section 4.3(c)(1) along the southern property line for Ritchie Station Self Storage, Parcel 1.

c. Section 4.4, Screening Requirements, requires that all dumpsters be screened from all adjacent public roads. The proposed trash enclosure in the southwestern corner of the site is proposed to be enclosed with a six-foot-high concrete masonry unit wall, which will match the proposed building architecture. This sight-tight wall enclosure is consistent with the Landscape Manual requirements in this section.

d. Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, requires a buffer between adjacent incompatible land uses; however, the only adjacent use, an integrated shopping center with more than 60,000 gross square feet, is not considered an incompatible use.

e. Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements, requires certain percentages of native plants be provided on-site, along with no invasive plants and no plants being planted on slopes steeper than three-to-one. The submitted landscape plan provides the required schedule and notes.

10. **Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance:** This site is not subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance because the property contains less than 10,000 square feet of woodland and does not have a previously approved tree conservation plan. A standard letter of exemption was approved for the site on June 1, 2011.

11. **Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The project is subject to the requirements of Subtitle 25, Division 3: The Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance. The requirement for the subject property, proposed Parcel 1, is ten percent of the gross tract area or 0.169 acre (7,362 square feet) based on the I-1 and C-S-C zoning. There are no existing trees left on the site, so the tree canopy coverage (TCC) requirement must be met through proposed landscape trees. The submitted landscape plan shows the proposed planting of 30 shade trees for a total of 7,500 square feet of TCC, which satisfies the requirement.

12. **Referral Comments:** The subject application was referred to the concerned agencies and divisions. The referral comments are summarized as follows:

a. **Community Planning South Division:** In a memorandum dated January 27, 2012, the Community Planning South Division provided the following analysis of the DSP:

This application is consistent with the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for the Developed Tier. This application conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2010 Approved Master Plan for Subregion 4.

The vision statement for the Subregion 4 Plan includes industrial areas that are improved and buffered to minimize their visual and environmental impacts. (See p. 50 of the Subregion 4 Plan)

Policy 1 under the Proposed Industrial Use Development Pattern of the Subregion 4 Plan is to "Preserve and enhance existing industrial uses wherever possible along the northern and eastern perimeter of the subregion." (p. 125)

b. **Transportation Planning Section:** In a memorandum dated January 20, 2012, the Transportation Planning Section provided the following analysis of the DSP:

The site is located on proposed Parcel 1, Ritchie Station Self Storage, which was approved under Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-11014, but has not yet been recorded. All transportation-related preliminary plan conditions are discussed in Finding 8 above.

The site has frontage on Walker Mill Road, which is a master plan arterial facility. The site also has frontage along Ritchie Station Court and Ritchie Spur Road. Dedication requirements were fully considered during the preliminary plan review. Access and circulation are acceptable.

c. **Subdivision Review Section:** In a memorandum dated February 9, 2012, the Subdivision Review Section provided an analysis of the DSP as follows:

The subject property is located on Tax Map 74 in Grid D-4, within the Light Industrial (I-1) Zone for 1.52 acres and within the Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C) Zone for 0.17 acre. The site is currently undeveloped. The applicant is submitting a detailed site plan for the construction of a 104,400-square-foot consolidated storage facility for the subject property.

The site is the subject of approved Preliminary Plan of Subdivision 4-11014 and the resolution was adopted by the Planning Board on December 8, 2011 (PGCPB Resolution No. 11-108). The preliminary plan is valid until December 8, 2013. A final plat for the subject property must be accepted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) before the preliminary plan expires or a new preliminary plan is required. The applicant may ask for an extension of the validity period for the preliminary plan beyond December 8, 2013.

The Planning Board approved the preliminary plan with 12 conditions which are discussed in Finding 8 above.

d. **Permit Review Section:** The Permit Review Section provided several comments which are either not applicable at this time, have been addressed through revisions to the plans, or are addressed through proposed conditions of approval of this detailed site plan.

e. **Environmental Planning Section:** The Environmental Planning Section, in an e-mail dated January 10, 2012, indicated they had no issues with the DSP.

f. **Prince George's County Police Department:** At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, comments have not been received from the Police Department.

g. **Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T):** In a memorandum dated January 20, 2012, DPW&T provided a standard response on issues such as frontage improvements, soils, storm drainage systems, and utilities in order to be in accordance with the requirements of DPW&T. Those issues will be enforced by DPW&T at the time of the issuance of permits. DPW&T also indicated that the subject DSP is consistent with approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 14459-2009.

h. **Prince George's County Health Department:** At the time of the writing of this

technical staff report, comments have not been received from the Health Department.

i. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC):** At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, comments have not been received from WSSC.

j. **Verizon:** At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, comments have not been received from Verizon.

k. **Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO):** At the time of the writing of this technical staff report, comments have not been received from PEPCO.

13. As required by Section 27-285(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, 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.

14. Per Section 27-285(b)(4) of the Zoning Ordinance, a required finding for approval of a detailed site plan is as follows:

> **The Planning Board may approve a Detailed Site Plan if it finds that the regulated environmental features have been preserved and/or restored in a natural state to the fullest extent possible.**

The site does not contain any regulated environmental features, such as streams, wetlands, or floodplain. Therefore, no preservation or restoration of environmental features is required as part of this DSP approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing evaluation and analysis, the Urban Design staff recommends that the Planning Board adopt the findings of this report and APPROVE Detailed Site Plan DSP-11028, Alternative Compliance AC-12001, and a variance from Section 27-475.04(a)(1)(A) for Ritchie Station Self Storage, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to signature approval, the following revisions shall be made to the detailed site plan (DSP) or the following information shall be provided:

   a. Revise the DSP to add a note and a label that direct access to Walker Mill Road from Parcel 1 is denied.

   b. Revise General Note 6 on the DSP to state that a maximum of one-third of the required parking spaces may be compact.

2. Prior to issuance of any use and occupancy permits on-site, the applicant shall obtain approval of a revision to Detailed Site Plan DSP-04080, by the Planning Board or it's designee, Ffor off-site landscaping and site improvements.