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## Detailed Site Plan

## DSP-10045

Application	General Data	
<b>Project Name:</b> Monroe Gardens—Quincy  <b>Location:</b> Southeastern quadrant of the intersection of Quincy Street and 53rd Street.  <b>Applicant/Address:</b> Quincy Manor LLP and Monroe Gardens LLP 3824 Klingle Place, NW Washington, DC 20016	Planning Board Hearing Date:	07/26/12
	Staff Report Date:	07/17/12
	Date Accepted:	11/30/11
	Planning Board Action Limit:	Waived
	Plan Acreage:	2.425
	Zone:	R-18
	Dwelling Units:	125
	Gross Floor Area:	NA
	Planning Area:	69
	Tier:	Developed
	Council District:	05
	Election District	02
	Municipality:	NA
200-Scale Base Map:	205NE04	

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates	
Residential revitalization per Section 27-445.10 of the Zoning Ordinance for 125 multifamily units in two buildings.	Informational Mailing:	01/14/11
	Acceptance Mailing:	11/28/11
	Sign Posting Deadline:	06/26/12

<b>Staff Recommendation</b>		<b>Staff Reviewer:</b> Ruth Grover <b>Phone Number:</b> 301-952-4317 <b>E-mail:</b> Ruth.Grover@ppd.mncppc.org	
<b>APPROVAL</b>	<b>APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS</b>	<b>DISAPPROVAL</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Detailed Site Plan DSP-10045  
Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan TCP2-003-12  
Monroe Gardens—Quincy

The Urban Design staff has completed its 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

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

- a. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance in the Multifamily Medium Density Residential (R-18) Zone and under the Residential Revitalization provisions of Section 27-445.10.
- b. The requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*.
- c. The requirements of the Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance.
- d. The requirements of the Prince George's County Woodland Conservation Ordinance.
- e. Referral comments.

FINDINGS

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

1. **Request:** The subject application requests the construction of 125 multifamily residential dwelling units under the Residential Revitalization provisions of Section 27-445.10 in the R-18 (Multifamily Medium Density Residential) Zone.

2. **Development Data Summary**

	<b>EXISTING</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
Zone	R-18	R-18
Use(s)	Residential	Residential
Acreage	2.4251	2.4251
Parcels	1	1

**Parking Distribution Chart**

<b>Parking Spaces Provided</b>		<b>Remarks</b>	<b>Parking Spaces Generally Required Per Part 11</b>
<b>Regular</b>	<b>Compact</b>		
23		On-street parallel parking*	2 per unit and 0.5 per unit, for those with more than one bedroom
8		Existing parking lot	
84		Structured parking	
	33	Surface parking lot	
Total: 115	33	Grand Total: 148	Total: 267

\*Calculated at 22 feet per parking space for 525 feet of street frontage.

<b>Unit Type</b>	<b>Building One</b>	<b>Building Two</b>	<b>Totals</b>
1 Bedroom	36	22	58
1 Bedroom + Den	17	17	35
2 Bedroom	19	14	33
Total Number of Units: 125			

3. **Location:** The site is in Planning Area 69, Council District 5. More specifically, it is located in the southeastern quadrant of the intersection of Quincy Street and 53rd Street at 5353 Quincy Street.
4. **Surrounding Uses:** The subject property is bounded to the north by Quincy Street, with multifamily dwelling units beyond; to the west by multifamily dwelling units; to the south by Quincy Run and senior multifamily dwelling units beyond; and to the east by vacant property in common ownership with the senior multifamily dwelling unit project to the south.
5. **Previous Approvals:** The site is subject to the requirements of approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 33617-2007-01, dated October 5, 2010.
6. **Design Features:** The project is proposed to be accessed via a one-way entrance at the eastern end of the project's Quincy Street frontage and exited via a second one-way entrance at the western end of the project's Quincy Street frontage. The buildings, labeled "Building 1" on the western portion of the site and "Building 2" on the eastern portion of the site, vary in size with Building 1 originally planned to contain 72 units and Building 2, 53 units, for a total of 125. The unit count in Building 2 has been decreased in size by two units (to 53 units) in order to include indoor recreational facilities, resulting in a total of 125 units. The indoor recreational facilities proposed include:

- A 320-square-foot Wi-Fi room;
- A 720-square-foot exercise room; and
- Men and women’s restroom facilities.

The Wi-Fi room is planned to include computers, printers, scanners, copiers, and fax machines and the exercise room is planned to include four elliptical, treadmill, and/or bicycle machines, two multi-weight strength building machines, and one set of free weights.

Outdoor recreational facilities include a 300-square-foot handicap-accessible gazebo, an unspecified number of grills and picnic tables, and an unspecified assortment of play equipment. A recommended condition below would add specificity to the program of both indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.

Parking is provided under Building 2 (82 spaces), in the existing parking lot (8 spaces), by 45-degree angled parking at the rear of the building (33 spaces), and 23 parallel spaces along the Quincy Street frontage. The site is well landscaped primarily at its periphery, though some landscaping is included at the edges of the parking lot drive aisles along the front building façade.

The architecture of the smaller of the two buildings provides visual interest through changes in color of brick and alternation of brick with glass and other materials. The roofline is primarily flat with some definition on the central building element, which contains the front entrance, and on two areas of extensive glazing on the eastern and western portions of the building, flanking single-windowed lighter color brick between the glazed areas. The lighter color brick on these two portions of the building is repeated above the front entranceway and the glazed areas are picked up in two one-story-shorter (three story as opposed to four) elements placed between the central elements and the elements on either end of the building. A recommended condition below proposes some modifications to increase the visual interest of the architecture of the sides and rear façades of the buildings.

The larger building’s front façade is almost identical to the smaller building, though somewhat longer, six windows across with the same heavily glazed three-story-high areas flanking the central entranceway in both buildings. The fenestration pattern varies slightly between the smaller and larger building in that the central entranceway on the larger building is flanked by only one window on either side on the four stories, whereas on the smaller building the front entranceway is flanked by two windows on each story, with a triple window in the uppermost story.

The architecture of the rear of the building is much plainer, with only fenestration and some variation in brick color offering any amount of visual interest. Also, the plain, undetailed garage doors are also apparent from the back and, unadorned as they are, contribute nothing to the aesthetics of the rear façades of the two buildings. The side elevations are likewise markedly plain compared to the front, with very little detailing and only color variation in the brick providing any level of visual interest. Some areas of painted cementitious trim and hardiplank siding are utilized on the rear. A recommended condition below proposes modifications intended to improve the architecture of the side and rear façades of the buildings.

A single attractive metal-clad, wood, freestanding gateway sign has been submitted for the project. Sitting on brick masonry supports approximately one-foot-tall, the sign is approximately three feet, two inches by ten feet and the name of the project “Monroe Gardens” is included on the sign in nine-inch-tall letters. The sign is indicated to be grey in color, with white letters, and the masonry supports are shown in a neutral/red tone. The retaining wall along the stream is

specified to be constructed of keystone masonry units. Though the color of the wall is unspecified, it appears from a provided rendering that it is to be of a beige or sand color.

## COMPLIANCE WITH EVALUATION CRITERIA

7. **Zoning Ordinance:** The subject application has been reviewed for compliance with the requirements in the R-18 Zone, as modified by Section 27-445.10, and the site plan design guidelines of the Zoning Ordinance.
- a. The subject application is in conformance with the requirements of Section 27-441, which governs permitted uses in residential zones. The proposed multifamily units are a permitted use in the R-18 Zone.
  - b. The proposal need not conform to the requirements of Section 27-442, Regulations, as it is exempted by Section 27-445.10, Residential Revitalization, of the Zoning Ordinance.
  - c. The subject project also conforms to the requirements of Section 27-445.10, Residential Revitalization, provided the recommended conditions as described below are incorporated into the approval of the project. The following gives a detailed description of this conformance:

### **Residential Revitalization**

The subject project meets the applicability requirements for residential revitalization as defined in Section 27-445.10(a)(1). This Section states:

**(a) Applicability.**

- (1) Residential Revitalization, as defined in this Subtitle and permitted in the Table of Uses in Part 5, shall be limited to any form of existing multifamily or attached one-family dwelling units or unimproved property on which multifamily dwelling units existed on January 1, 2011, but were subsequently razed as a result of the condemnation proceedings initiated by the County that are located in a Revitalization Tax Credit District.**
- (2) This section is not applicable to any other project.**

**Comment:** The subject property has extant multifamily dwelling units on it qualifying it as a residential revitalization project under the above definition in the Zoning Ordinance. This property is located in census tract number 804300, which is one of the census tracts listed in Section 10-235.03 of the Prince George's County Code which created the Revitalization Tax Credit District.

The subject project meets the requirements of Section 27-445.10(b), as follows:

**(b) Requirements.**

- (1) Dwelling units, or property on which they formerly existed, as described in (a)(1) of this Section may be replaced by proposed multifamily, attached one-family or detached one-family dwelling units in a Residential Revitalization project.**

**Comment:** The existing multifamily units are proposed to be replaced by new multifamily units as is allowed in this requirement in the Residential Revitalization legislation.

- (2) The dwelling units, or property as described in (b)(1) above, shall have a minimum density of twelve (12) units per acre of the net lot or tract area.**

**Comment:** The 125 units proposed on this project on 2.01 net parcel acres provides approximately 62 units per acre, well in excess of the minimum density of 12 units per acre as required above.

- (3) The number, location, and design of compact and standard parking spaces shown on the approved Detailed Site Plan shall constitute the parking design regulations for the development.**

**Comment:** The proposed parking is as follows:

Spaces Provided		Remarks
Regular	Compact	
23		On-street parallel parking
8		Existing parking lot
84		Structured parking
	33	Surface parking lot
Total: 115	33	Grand Total: 148

A recommended condition of this approval would either increase the number of structured parking spaces for the development or reduce the number of units so as to eliminate the parking at the rear of the facility. Also, parking in the right-of-way has been reduced because the existing perpendicular parking will have to be replaced by parallel spaces as required by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T). The resultant number, location, and design of compact and standard parking spaces shown on the approved DSP shall constitute the parking design regulations for the development in accordance with this requirement.

- (4) Regulations concerning the height of structures, lot size and coverage, frontage, setbacks, density, bedroom percentages and other requirements of the specific zone do not apply to uses and structures in a Residential Revitalization project. The dimensions**

**and percentages shown on the approved Detailed Site Plan shall constitute the development regulations.**

**Comment:** The dimensions and percentages as shown on the subject DSP, which shall constitute the development regulations for the project, are as follows:

Net Parcel Area: 2.01 net acres  
Maximum Density: 62 units per net acre  
Lot Coverage: 53 percent  
Lot Width Frontage at Front Building Line: NA  
Lot Width Frontage at Front Street Line: NA  
Lot Width on cul-de-sac Front Street Line: NA  
Front Yard Building Restriction Line: 15 feet  
Side Yard Building Restriction Line: 39 feet  
Rear Yard Building Restriction Line: 71 feet  
Allowable Building Height: 109.50 feet

A suggested condition in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report would require that the plans be revised to include these development regulations in General Note 29 on the plans for the project.

- (5) The normal parking requirement shall be reduced by thirty percent (30%). An additional reduction may be allowed upon a determination that:**
- (A) An additional reduction is necessary to alleviate conditions that are particular to the proposed use, given its nature at this location, or to alleviate conditions which are prevalent in older areas of the County which were predominately developed prior to November 29, 1949; and**
- (B) The additional reduction will not infringe upon the parking and loading needs of adjacent residential areas.**

**Comment:** Section 27-568, Schedule (number) of spaces required, generally, of the Zoning Ordinance would require 2 spaces per unit or 250 spaces plus 0.5 for all units with bedrooms in excess of one per unit or 0.5 (33) or 17 for a total of 267 parking spaces for the 125 units. Thirty percent of the 267 required spaces would be 81. Subtracting 81 from the required 267 would yield a requirement of 186. The applicant is currently offering 115 as described in b(3) above. It is difficult to conclude that the above required (a) and (b) can be met in this application to warrant a further reduction.

The additional reduction requested is not necessary to alleviate any special conditions convincingly set forth by the applicant that are particular to multifamily residential use in two four-story apartment buildings at this location. Also, the further reduction cannot be justified on the basis that the additional reduction is necessary to alleviate conditions which are prevalent in older areas of the County which were predominately developed prior to November 29, 1949, as this project is completely redeveloping the existing units, starting with a “blank slate” and able to establish its own parking scheme. Lastly, there is no

guarantee that the additional reduction will not infringe upon the parking and loading needs of adjacent residential areas. In fact, it seems likely that parking demand unsatisfied by the proposed number of spaces will cause residents to park along the street, thus making it more difficult for residents of adjacent buildings to find parking.

The applicant has already included in his calculations, as the Zoning Ordinance allows, the 23 cars that can be accommodated along the project's 525-foot-long Quincy Street frontage, so residents are going to have to go further afield to find parking. The 30 percent reduction from the required 267 parking spaces would yield a parking requirement of 186, when the applicant is only offering 115, leaving a deficit of 71 and creating that much additional parking demand in an area already taxed by a number of multifamily and single-family attached developments that rely heavily on on-street parking in the vicinity of the subject site. Therefore, and for other reasons explained elsewhere in this technical staff report, the Urban Design Section recommends that the applicant either provide additional structured parking or reduce the number of units in the subject project.

**(6) The project shall comply with the requirements of the Landscape Manual to the extent that is practical.**

**Comment:** A review of the landscape plan indicates that the applicant has conformed to the requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*. Therefore, it may be said that the applicant has met this requirement.

8. **The 2010 Prince George's County Landscape Manual:** The proposed development is subject to the requirements of Section 4.1, Residential Requirements; Section 4.2, Requirements for Landscape Strips along Streets; Section 4.3(b), Parking Lot Requirements; and Section 4.9, Sustainable Landscaping Requirements, of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual).

Section 27-445.10(b)(6), Residential Revitalization, of the Zoning Ordinance states that the project shall comply with the requirements of the Landscape Manual to the extent that is practical.

The Urban Design staff reviewed the proposed landscape plan and found that the submittals meet this requirement.

9. **The Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance:** The application is subject to the Prince George's County Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance, Subtitle 25, Division 3, which became effective February 1, 2012 and requires the provision of varying percentages of tree canopy coverage (TCC) dependent on the zoning of the site. The subject project's location in the R-18 Zone requires the provision of 15 percent or 2.4251 acres of the site be covered in tree canopy. The applicant is utilizing 8,712 square feet of existing trees and 9,675 square feet of trees to be installed as landscaping, for a total of 18,387 square feet to meet the TCC requirement of 15,845 square feet. Therefore, it may be said that the applicant has fulfilled the requirements of the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance.
10. **The Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance:** The property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George's County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance because the entire site is more than 40,000 square feet in area

and there are more than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland. A Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan, TCP2-003-12, has been submitted.

The Environmental Planning Section has reviewed submitted TCP2-003-12 and recommended its approval, subject to conditions. Those conditions are included in the recommended conditions below. Therefore, staff finds that the plan is in compliance with the Woodland Conservation Ordinance.

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

- a. **Historic Preservation Section**—In comments dated December 6, 2011, the Historic Preservation Section stated that the proposed razing of seven buildings, constructed in 1950 and containing 38 apartment units, and their replacement by two new apartment buildings containing 125 apartment units would have no effect identified historic sites, resources, or districts. They requested, however, that the applicant be required to provide a typical floor plan for the complex and photographs of the exterior of a typical building front, side, and rear and of the interior of a typical apartment unit.
- b. **Archeology**—In a memorandum dated December 15, 2011, the archeology coordinator stated that she would not recommend a Phase I archeological survey on the subject site as a search of current and historic photographs, topographic and historic maps, and locations of currently known archeological sites indicates that the probability of archeological sites within the subject property is low. Further, she stated that the Monroe Gardens apartment complex currently on the subject site and proposed to be removed as part of the project, was identified as a garden-apartment complex in a National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property document study, *Apartment Buildings and Garden Apartment Complexes in Prince George's County, Maryland: 1934-1935*, but that the study did not include exterior photographs of the Monroe Gardens apartments or provide interior floor plans. Therefore, she echoed the Historic Preservation Section's request that the applicant be required to provide exterior photographs of Monroe Gardens and a representative floor plan of a typical unit in the housing complex.

**Comment:** A recommended condition below would require that the applicant provide, prior to signature approval of the plans for the project, a typical floor plan for the complex and photographs of the exterior of the front, side, and rear of a typical building and of the interior of a typical apartment unit.

- c. **Community Planning North Division**—In a memorandum dated July 6, 2012, the Community Planning North Division stated that the application is not inconsistent with the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan Development Pattern* policies for the Developed Tier. The vision for the Developed Tier is to create a network of sustainable, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, medium- to high-density neighborhoods. They also said that the approval of the application would not violate the General Plan's growth goals for the year 2025 upon review of the Prince George's County current General Plan Growth Policy Update. Additionally, the Community Planning North Division stated that the subject application conforms to the residential medium-high land use recommendations of the 2009 *Approved Port Towns Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (Sector Plan).

The Community Planning North Division, however, raised the following planning issues:

- (1) The subject property is located in the approved Port Towns Sector Plan's Community Health and Wellness zone and should incorporate sustainable design and development practices to benefit the overall health and wellness of residents. Increased access to recreational facilities is a key area of emphasis for residents in this area; therefore, the application should define how the plan improves access to recreational facilities and activities, including walking. More specifically, the Community Planning North Division pointed to the following recommendations contained on page 84 of the approved Port Towns plan:
  - **Renovate and improve park facilities in neighborhood parks;**
  - **In large residential redevelopment projects not located within a ten minute walk of existing neighborhood park facilities, the developer should provide outdoor recreational space to accommodate a playground, a non-regulation playfield, and/or court (basketball, skate park, futsal or tennis), and a picnic area. A loop walk should be developed that utilizes existing and new park trails and paths and neighborhood sidewalks. The purpose is to provide play opportunities for youth and healthy activities for adults.**
- (2) Although the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) owns the South Bladensburg Park which is located approximately 1,700 feet from the subject property, the site is currently undeveloped with the exception of a county stormwater management facility. The South Bladensburg Park does not include any park facilities and would not meet the objectives of the approved Sector Plan.
- (3) The approved plan recommends development of the Quincy Run Trail adjacent to the subject property (page 75) to connect the area in a large loop trail network that links the residential areas to the Bladensburg Town Center and the Bladensburg Waterfront Park. More specifically it states:
  - **Coordinate acquisition or public use easements along a developed greenway to provide a trail along Quincy Run within a developed greenway. (This trail will utilize existing M-NCPPC parkland and will require some additional parkland. In areas where stream valley trail construction is not feasible, standard or wide sidewalks should be utilized along adjacent roads.**
- (4) New wide sidewalks and trail connections especially to community facilities such as schools, parks, and recreational facilities are recommended on page 76 and stated in part as follows:
  - **Provide trail and sidewalk connections to connect land uses as opportunities become available and development occurs;**
  - **Provide sidewalk connections along priority corridors within the Port Towns in order to provide safe routes to schools. These corridors include: Upshur Street, Tilden Road, 55th Avenue, Quincy**

**Street, and 54th Place, which have already been identified as needing pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the Bladensburg Town Center Plan.**

In addition, Community Planning North stated, to further the health and wellness goals of the Port towns, sustainable development practices are recommended in part, to reduce and improve the quality of stormwater runoff. Given the proximity of the site to Quincy Run, efforts to reduce the impervious surfaces and treat stormwater should be taken. Particularly, they pointed to the following policies and corresponding strategies found on page 56 of the approved Sector Plan, which they felt, should be addressed by the applicant:

**POLICY 1: Restore and enhance water quality in areas that have been degraded and preserve water quality in areas not degraded.**

**Strategies:**

- **Identify appropriate stormwater management strategies to alleviate the water quality impacts of land development and stream channel erosion and assist in the attainment and maintenance of water quality standards consistent with federal, state, and county programs and regulations.**
- **Identify highly visible, ecologically significant restoration projects within the primary corridors. Target mitigation efforts to include expanded vegetation buffers along streams, wetlands, and at headwaters for preservation of open space and utilize linear stormwater systems, sediment ponds, and created wetland stormwater management strategies that function as public amenities.**

**POLICY 2: Require new and infill development to implement stormwater management techniques that minimize the amount and toxicity of stormwater runoff from the site.**

**Strategies:**

- **Require street tree plantings to be incorporated to manage stormwater management as an element of both green streets and open space enhancement.**
- **Establish maximum impervious surface percentages in urbanized areas during the evaluation of development proposals. Disconnection of large tracts of impervious surfaces shall be achieved through the use of alternative pavers, soil amendments and conditioning, bioretention areas, roof top gardens, and other landscaping techniques that increase infiltration.”**

In closing, the Community Planning North Division stated that on Sheet A-7 of the applicant’s most recently submitted detailed site plan, the applicant has indicated that he will provide recreational amenities on the site as suggested in the Port Towns Sector Plan, but that other sector plan recommendations that they outlined in their referral comments should be given further consideration.

**Comment:** Proposed conditions contained in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report would assist the subject plan to better conform to the other sector plan recommendations of concern to the Community Planning North Division.

d. **Transportation Planning Section**—In a memorandum dated December 20, 2011, the Transportation Planning Section offered the following transportation-related review comments:

- The application is required pursuant to the requirements for residential revitalization under Section 27-445.10 of the Zoning Ordinance. It is noted that residential revitalization includes a reduction in the off-site parking requirement.
- The underlying subdivision is old; therefore, there are no caps on development that would restrict this expansion of the use. Because the site is currently developed and the buildings will be razed to construct the proposed development, there will be no preliminary plan.

**Comment:** Section 27-445.10, Residential Revitalization, exempts the subject application from a preliminary plan requirement.

- The site has frontage on Quincy Street and is adjacent to properties within the Town of Bladensburg. Quincy Street does not carry a master plan designation. It is platted as a 60-foot primary residential street, which is acceptable.
- The existing residential buildings on the site will be razed and replaced by two larger residential buildings. Much of the on-site parking will be placed under the buildings; other on-site parking will replace existing on-street parking. Access and on-site circulation are acceptable.
- As such, aside from noting the requirements and the major features of the plan, the Transportation Planning Section has no comment on this plan.

e. **Subdivision Review Section**—In a memorandum dated December 21, 2011, the Subdivision Review Section offered the following:

The property is known as Parcel A located on Tax Map 50 in Grid E-4, and is 2.42 acres. Parcel A was recorded in plat book WWW 30@18 on June 11, 1957. The boundary of the property as reflected on the site plans is consistent with the record plat. The property is improved with 38 multifamily units. All structures are to be razed and 125 multifamily units are being proposed.

Section 24-111 of the Subdivision Regulations provides for exemptions from the requirement of filing a preliminary plan of subdivision for parcels with a record plat. Specifically, in this instance, the property is subject to Section 24-11(c)(4) which provides:

- (c) **A final plat of subdivision approved prior to October 27, 1970, shall be re-subdivided prior to the issuance of a building permit unless:**
- (4) **The development of more than five thousand (5,000) square feet of gross floor area, which constitutes at least ten percent (10%) of the**

**total area of the site, has been constructed pursuant to a building permit issued on or before December 31, 1991.**

The property was recorded in Prince George's County Land Records in 1957. The total property land area is 105,641 square feet, but the existing development gross floor area (GFA) on the property is not stated on the site plan. The applicant should revise the plan to show the existing GFA. Based on the aerial photos of the site on PGAtlas, the existing structure has been in existence prior to 1991. The site is exempt from the requirement of filing a preliminary plan of subdivision under Section 24-111(c)(4) based on the existing conditions and structures reflected on the site plan provided by the applicant and available information found on PGAtlas, if the site has a GFA of at least 10,564 square feet.

To ensure that the exemption will apply to future development of the site and if the applicant proposes to raze any existing structure in the future, staff would strongly recommend that the applicant file a final plat for the site in accordance with Section 24-108 of the Subdivision Regulations for which no preliminary plan is required. The final plat would include a note to vest the exemption from filing a preliminary plan pursuant to Section 24-111(c)(4) as described above. If the applicant does not vest this exemption and the existing structures are razed, the exemption is no longer valid.

The Subdivision Section's suggestions are reflected as appropriate in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

- f. **Trails**—In a memorandum dated January 9, 2012, the Transportation Planning Section indicated that they had reviewed the subject proposal for conformance with the *Approved Countywide Master Plan of Transportation* (MPOT) and the *Approved Port Towns Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* (area master plan). The proposal was also reviewed for conformance with the trails-related requirements of Section 27-445.10, Residential Revitalization, of the Zoning Ordinance. The subject property is located along Quincy Street, south and west of the Annapolis Road Gateway Character Area, which is described in the area master plan. The area master plan recommends specific street types for the character area, but the subject property does not appear to be affected directly by the character area recommendations for street types (Map 28, page 155). Further, they stated that Quincy Street is specifically recommended for road and sidewalk improvements in the area master plan (Map 31, page 162). It is recommended for a bikeway, specifically (page 124), and the plan contains specific capital improvement project recommendations for sidewalk on Quincy Street. Quincy Street is recommended to be part of a "pedestrian/bicycle loop" around the perimeter of the Bladensburg Town Center.

Bikeway feasibility on Quincy Street has not been completed by the county, but the road is currently utilized by cyclists. The area master plan specifically recommends sidewalks and "Share the Road with a Bike" signage with appropriate pavement markings on Quincy Street (page 71). Typically, "Share the Road with a Bike" signage is provided within the right-of-way along a road or within an easement. It is recommended that the applicant provide a financial contribution of \$210 to DPW&T for the placement of "Share the Road with a Bike" signage along the property's Quincy Road frontage. This signage may be placed adjacent to the curb, subject to modification by DPW&T. If road frontage improvements are required by the DPW&T, a paved asphalt shoulder or wide outside curb lane is also encouraged to implement the master-planned bikeway and safely

accommodate bicycle traffic. The Transportation Planning Section then offered the following regarding the MPOT Complete Street Policies 1 and 2:

The MPOT Complete Streets Policy 1 recommends sidewalks along both sides of all new road construction within the Developed and Developing Tiers. The subject property is within the Developed Tier and is described in the *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. However, no new road construction is proposed with the subject application. Further, sidewalks already exist along the subject property frontage, though these sidewalks are situated at a severe angle at the street curb and abut perpendicularly to on-street vehicular parking. There are no ADA-accessible (Americans with Disabilities Act) ramps currently along the Quincy Road street frontage and the proposal does not include any property dedication for road frontage improvements. Any pedestrian crosswalk locations or improvements to the roadway or sidewalks will be subject to modification by DPW&T.

The MPOT Complete Streets Policy 2 recommends that all road frontage improvements and road capital improvement projects within the Developed and Developing Tiers be designed to accommodate all modes of transportation, and that continuous sidewalks and on-road bicycle facilities should be included to the extent feasible and practical. The Transportation Planning Section recommended that, if road frontage improvements are required by DPW&T, the applicant reconstruct the sidewalks along Quincy Street, establish a new grade along the entire subject property frontage of Quincy Street to make it more accessible, and that ADA-accessible sidewalk ramp locations be constructed along Quincy Street.

The Transportation Planning Section then offered the following regarding the stream valley trail: There is a stream valley trail recommended in the area master plan, the Quincy Run Trail (Map 17, page 73), which was proposed to be located behind the subject property. This trail location was moved by the County Council when they approved the MPOT. Investigations showed that this trail cannot be constructed due to steep slope issues and other environmental concerns. The MPOT bikeway map shows a sidepath along Quincy Street, but this sidepath has not been studied for feasibility and no recommendation is being made at this time to provide this sidepath.

With regard to bicycle parking, the Transportation Planning Section stated that bicycle parking included as part of this project would help implement the county's continuous network of sidewalks, bikeways, and trails as recommended in the MPOT (pages 1–10) and therefore recommended the inclusion of three bicycle parking concrete pads, with U-shaped bicycle racks, placed near the entrances to the buildings and within the parking garage, if feasible. The proximity of the subject development to the master-planned pedestrian/bicycle loop on Quincy Street makes the provision of adequate bicycle parking facilities on the site more necessary, and will encourage multi-modal transportation and comprise a part of the network of safe travel to schools and other locations as recommended currently by county policy.

The Transportation Planning Section's trails-related recommendations have been included as appropriate in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

- g. **Permit Review Section**—In a memorandum dated December 29, 2011, the Permit Review Section offered numerous comments that have either been addressed by revisions to the plan or in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

- h. **Environmental Planning Section**—In a revised memorandum dated July 13, 2012, the Environmental Planning Section stated that they had reviewed Detailed Site Plan DSP-10045 and Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan TCP2-003-12, and offered the following:

No development proposals had been previously reviewed by the Environmental Planning Section for the subject property, though a Natural Resources Inventory, NRI-002-11, was reviewed and approved as a submission requirement of this application. Further, they stated that the submitted application had been prepared in accordance with County Council Bill CB-58-2001, which allows for the renovation or redevelopment of any form of existing multifamily or attached one-family dwelling units, in a designated Revitalization Tax Credit District, where the renovation or redevelopment meets the standards and criteria of Section 27-445.10 of the Zoning Ordinance, Residential Revitalization. The property is subject to the current provisions of Subtitles 25 and 27 of the County Code that went into effect September 1, 2010 because there are no previous land development approvals to provide grandfathering.

The Environmental Planning Section then offered the following description of the environmentally-related features of the site:

This 2.43-acre site in the R-18 Zone is located on the northern side of Quincy Street at its intersection with 53rd Place. The site is currently developed with seven multifamily residential buildings that are apartments and is 34 percent wooded. Stormwater runoff from the site eventually drains to the Anacostia River. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Web Soil Survey, the principal soils on the site are the Christiana and Sunnyside series. Marlboro clay is not found to occur on or in the vicinity of this site. According to information obtained from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, National Heritage Program, there are no rare, threatened, or endangered species found to occur on this property or adjacent properties. No designated historic or scenic roads will be affected by this development. Landover Road (MD 202) is an arterial roadway and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (MD 295) is a freeway, both are generally regulated for noise impacts. Because of the distance from the subject site to these two roadways, and the existing surrounding development, traffic-related noise impacts to this site are not anticipated. The site is within the Upper Anacostia watershed of the Potomac River basin. The property is in the Developed Tier of the 2002 General Plan.

The Environmental Planning Section then offered the following review of the environmentally-related issues included in the *Approved Port Towns Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment*:

The site is subject to the Port Towns Sector Plan. The Environmental Infrastructure section of the sector plan contains policies and strategies to preserve, enhance, and where appropriate, restore environmentally-sensitive features. The text in **BOLD** is text from the Sector Plan that is applicable to this review. The plain text below provides comments on plan conformance.

**POLICY 1: Restore and enhance water quality in areas that have been degraded and preserve water quality in areas not degraded.**

**Strategies**

- **Identify appropriate stormwater management strategies to alleviate the water quality impacts of land development and stream channel erosion and assist in the attainment and maintenance of water quality standards consistent with federal, state, and county programs and regulations.**

Stormwater management (SWM) is subject to review and approval by DPW&T. The site, developed prior to SWM regulations, is currently conveying high volumes of untreated and uncontrolled (no water quantity control) runoff to the adjacent stream which has led to severe erosion problems along the stream. The proposed development will be required to treat at least 50 percent of the runoff before it is conveyed to the stream in accordance with the requirements of Subtitle 32 of the County Code; however, water quantity control is not required.

The Environmental Planning Section stated that, in a field visit held December 20, 2012, they determined that the adjacent stream was highly eroded and full of much trash and debris. In a second field visit on June 7, 2012, it was noted that a majority of the trash had been removed; however, the erosive effects of stormwater were highly visible. The channel has experienced bank failure, down cutting, and undercutting due to the erosive forces of large volumes of stormwater moving through the channel during storm events. Controlling high stormwater discharge is intended to help alleviate erosion problems, which is a primary concern with urban streams, particularly this one; however, according to DPW&T and per Subtitle 32, this site is not required to provide quantity control because it is a redevelopment project. Although some quantity control should be provided, this is consistent with Stormwater Management Code 32-175(b); however, it also states that the site must implement environmental site design to the fullest extent possible, as follows:

- (b) **All redevelopment designs shall:**
  - (1) **Reduce impervious area within the limit of disturbance (LOD) by at least 50 percent according to the Maryland Design Manual;**
  - (2) **Implement ESD to the MEP to provide water quality treatment for at least 50 percent of the existing impervious area within the LOD; (emphasis added) or**
  - (3) **Use a combination of subsections (b)(1) and (2) for at least 50 percent of the existing site impervious area within the LOD; and**
  - (4) **Infiltrate into the ground 100 percent of the annual average predevelopment groundwater recharge volume if soil's infiltration is 1.02 or greater.**

The site has an approved stormwater concept letter, referring to SWM Concept approval 33617-2007-01. The letter states that a filtration system is required and the site will be required to pay \$86,186.00 in-lieu-of providing on-site water quality control. The plan shows that some of the on-site stormwater will be conveyed to an underground treatment facility located to the rear of the proposed building. The facility will be designed to remove sediment and other pollutants in the stormwater runoff before it is conveyed to an existing storm drain pipe and eventually drains to the stream.

A letter from DPW&T dated January 6, 2012 states: “No structures are allowed within 25 feet of the floodplain.” The proposed building shown on the eastern side of the property appears to be within 25 feet of the floodplain. This is also stated in the approved concept letter. The plans must be revised to remove all structures from within 25 feet of the 100-year floodplain.

The applicant proposes to pave the entire area on the southern side of the proposed building, which is presently grassed, for surface parking. Paved areas are generally 100 percent impermeable. Developed grassed areas can be engineered to provide some permeability, naturally filtering pollutants from runoff, and also to promote stormwater conveyance at a slower rate. The rear of the proposed buildings should be designed to be vegetated with grass (as it is now) or some other form of vegetative design in order to meet the intent of “maximum extent practicable,” as discussed further below in the environmental review of impacts to regulated environmental features.

- **Identify highly visible, ecologically significant restoration projects within the primary corridors. Target mitigation efforts to include expanded vegetative buffers along streams, wetlands, and at the headwaters for preservation of open space and utilize linear stormwater systems, sediment ponds and created wetland systems as stormwater management strategies that function as public amenities.**

According to the Maryland Stream Corridor Assessment (SCA) for the Anacostia River, the stream valley associated with this site lacks adequate wooded buffer in the primary management areas (PMAs) due to the open area between the edge of the existing tree line and the existing buildings. The stream is also severely eroded due to upstream development and runoff. This will be discussed further below in the environmental review of impacts to the on-site PMA.

- **Implement conservation landscaping techniques that reduce water consumption and the need for fertilizers or chemicals.**

**Urban Design Comment:** The applicant has agreed and a recommended condition below would require that 100 percent of the plants utilized will be native, in keeping with this strategy.

- **Include trash reduction and removal strategies for urban stormwater management and storm drainage programs along the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River.**

The site is not located within the Northwest Branch. The adjacent and on-site stream was observed to contain a considerable amount of trash; however, based on a site visit on June 7, 2012, it appears that a significant amount of the trash in that area was removed

and, as part of the improvement of the subject site, the owner/applicant will be required to remove all trash from the on-site stream area in accordance with the requirements of Subtitle 13-235 of the County Code.

**POLICY 2: Require new and infill development to implement stormwater management techniques that minimize the amount and toxicity of stormwater runoff from a site.**

#### **Strategies**

- **Require the first inch of rainfall to be controlled on-site through methods that facilitate infiltration evapotranspiration, or reuse of the stormwater where appropriate.**
- **Require environmentally sensitive design stormwater techniques such as rain gardens, bioretention and infiltration areas, innovative stormwater outfalls, underground stormwater management, green streets, cisterns, rain barrels, grass swales, and stream stabilization to the fullest extent possible.**

According to the proposed design, a majority of the parking will be provided in an underground parking structure. Additionally, the plans show 33 pull-in parking spaces in the rear of the proposed building. The paving in the rear will increase on-site runoff and the presence of vehicles will significantly increase the amount of pollutants on-site. In order to alleviate on-site runoff volume and pollution and improve the water quality and quantity control on the site, these parking spaces should be relocated or removed, and the rear area should be designed to remain grassed, as they help to promote evapotranspiration. This area can also be redesigned with the installation of bioretention facilities, not only to contribute to stormwater control, but also to provide more aesthetic views into this area of the site.

- **Require the use of shared environmentally sensitive stormwater management facilities where appropriate.**

The site is in a high density area that was developed prior to the establishment of stormwater regulations. The code requires that, at a minimum, the site provide quality control. The plans currently propose an underground stormwater treatment facility. A shared facility that also treats some off-site runoff should also be considered.

- **Require street tree plantings to be incorporated to manage stormwater management as an element of both green streets and open space enhancement.**

According to the landscape plan, a few shade trees and several ornamental trees are proposed along the street frontage of the site.

- **Establish maximum impervious surface percentages in urbanized areas during the evaluation of development proposals. Disconnection of large tracts of impervious surfaces shall be achieved through the use of alternative pavers, soil amendments and conditioning, bioretention areas, rooftop gardens, and other landscaping techniques that increase infiltration.**

The applicant has proffered the use of alternative pavers in the rear of the proposed building; however, a 100 percent vegetated surface is preferred and is recommended by the Environmental Planning Section. Soil amendments and bioretention should be considered to provide more stormwater treatment and natural infiltration into the ground, but SWM is subject to review and approval by DPW&T.

- **Design parking areas as either shared or as structured lots. The use of parking garages and/or underground parking shall be priorities.**

A combination of underground and surface parking (on the western and southern sides of the building) has been proposed by the applicant. The Environmental Planning Section recommends the relocation or removal of the parking and paving at the rear, or southern side of the building, leaving the surface grassed or otherwise vegetated.

A suggested condition in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report would require the removal of parking and paving at the rear, or southern, side of the building.

**POLICY 3: Implement environmentally sensitive design building techniques to reduce overall energy consumption.**

By recommended condition below, the applicant would be required to address the policy of implementing environmentally-sensitive design building techniques to reduce overall energy consumption through the use of all Energy Star appliances, specially coated High E (energy efficient) glass, increasing the normal building insulation in the roof and walls to a higher than normal grade, and/or installing solar panels.

**POLICY 4: Preserve and enhance the existing urban tree canopy.**

**Strategies**

- **Require a minimum of ten percent tree canopy coverage on all new and redevelopment projects and encourage the preservation of existing specimen trees (trees 30 inches or greater in diameter at breast height).**

This recommendation is superseded by the Tree Canopy Coverage Ordinance of Subtitle 25, Division 3, which became effective on September 1, 2010. The ordinance requires the site provide a minimum of 15 percent or 0.36 acre of tree canopy based on R-18 zoning. According to the landscape plan, the requirement will be met using the on-site landscaping.

Section 25-122(b)(1)(G) requires that “Specimen trees, champion trees, and trees that are part of a historic site or are associated with a historic structure shall be preserved and the design shall either preserve the critical root zone of each tree in its entirety or preserve an appropriate percentage of the critical root zone in keeping with the tree’s condition and the species’ ability to survive construction as provided in the Technical Manual.”

The site contains two on-site specimen trees (Trees 4 and 6) and five off-site specimen trees (Trees 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7). The location and critical root zone of the specimen trees are not shown on the TCP2 nor is the specimen tree table that indicates the intended disposition of each tree. Based on the proposed limits of disturbance compared with the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI-002-11), neither of the two on-site specimen trees are

proposed to be removed, however, a significant portion of the critical root zone of Tree 4 will be impacted by grading. It is possible that this tree, a 30-inch sycamore, may not survive construction due to its poor condition and its location on a steep slope. A variance may be required prior to building permit if it is determined that this tree cannot be saved.

**Recommended Condition:** If it is determined during the construction phase that Specimen Tree 4 needs to be removed due to the proposed grading in the critical root zone, a variance to remove the tree shall be submitted and reviewed by the Planning Director prior to issuance of first building permit.

- **Encourage the development of community-based tree planting programs and where possible direct fee-in-lieu monies collected for conformance with the Woodland Conservation Ordinance to those programs.**

**Urban Design Comment:** Woodland conservation is discussed in the Environmental Review section.

- **Increase the percentage of urban tree canopy by planting trees and other vegetation especially along roadways, in median strips, and within residential communities.**

According to the landscape plan, the tree canopy requirement will be met through a combination of tree planting and woodland conservation.

**Urban Design Comment:** Conformance with the TCC requirement is discussed in the Environmental Review section.

- **Plant trees in strategic locations to cool buildings and mechanical equipment to reduce overall energy consumption.**

Woodland afforestation or reforestation is not proposed. All other planting shall be reviewed by the Urban Design Section.

**POLICY 5: Reduce light pollution and intrusion into the residential communities and environmentally sensitive areas.**

#### **Strategies**

- **Encourage the use of full cut-off optic light fixtures.**
- **Detailed lighting plans should be submitted for new and redevelopment proposals to ensure light is properly directed on a site and minimizes glare on other sites.**

**Urban Design Comment:** The lighting plan has been reviewed and the Urban Design Section has found that either full cut-off optic fixtures or others have been utilized that ensure light is directed on-site and glare to surrounding areas minimized.

**POLICY 7: Reduce adverse noise impacts to meet the State or Maryland noise standards.**

The nearest sources of traffic-related noise are Landover Road (MD 202), a designated arterial roadway, and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway (MD 295), a designated freeway, both generally regulated for noise impacts. Because of the distance from the subject site to these two roadways and the existing surrounding development, traffic-related noise impacts to this site are not anticipated. Further, the proposed development is not expected to be a noise generator.

**Green Infrastructure Plan Conformance**

The *Approved Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan* is a comprehensive vision for interconnecting environmental ecosystems in Prince George’s County. The purpose of the plan is to guide development, green space protection, mitigation activities, and to implement a long-range vision for preserving, protecting, enhancing, and/or restoring a continuous network of environmentally-important areas in the county by 2025. The plan outlines specific policies and strategies and discusses how the program may be effectively implemented. The Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan identifies the subject property within the designated network as having a regulated area and a gap area that is associated with the stream and its 60-foot-wide buffer on and adjacent to the site. The area is of the highest priority for preservation and planting.

The Type 2 tree conservation plan (TCP2) as submitted shows preservation of the PMA area on the southern side of the existing fence on the site. The plans propose to impact the area north of the existing fence with parking and paving, where the PMA extends onto the developed portion of the site. Due to the sensitive nature of the site, consideration should be given to maintaining the existing grassed layout in this area and preserving a vegetated connection to the stream valley as discussed further below in the environmental review of paving at the rear of the buildings in and around the PMA.

**Environmental Review**

A signed Natural Resources Inventory, NRI/024/08, was submitted with the application. The site contains stream buffer and 100-year floodplain associated with a stream valley on the adjacent properties to the north of the site. The NRI shows that the property does not contain any regulated woodlands. There are two specimen trees on the site.

The property is subject to the provisions of the Prince George’s County Woodland and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Ordinance (WCO) because the property is greater than 40,000 square feet in size and contains more than 10,000 square feet of existing woodland. A Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan, TCP2-003-12, has been submitted.

The site contains a total of 0.83 acre of woodland, of which 0.42 acre are located within the 100-year floodplain. The woodland conservation threshold (WCT) for this 2.43-acre property is 20 percent of the net tract area or 0.50 acre. The worksheet submitted shows a threshold of 25 percent, which is incorrect. The plan proposes to clear 0.10 acre of woodland resulting in an overall requirement of 0.50 acre. The plan proposes to meet the requirement with off-site woodland conservation. Approximately 0.73 acre will be preserved on-site adjacent to the stream, but not counted as woodland preservation.

The revised TCP2 is in conformance with the woodland conservation requirements. In accordance with Section 25-122(a)(6), any approved off-site woodland conservation shall

consider the following locations in the order listed: within the same sub-watershed, within the same watershed, within the same river basin, within the same growth tier, or within the same county of the subject site. The location of off-site woodland conservation will be addressed at the time of permit review.

The site contains landscaping notes and reforestation/afforestation notes that are not applicable to this plan because no woodland planting is proposed on this site. It is recommended that the applicant revise the plan to remove the landscaping and afforestation/reforestation notes.

The site contains significant environmental features that are required to be preserved and/or restored to the fullest extent possible under Section 27-285(b)(4) of the Zoning Ordinance. The design should avoid any impacts to streams, wetlands, or their associated buffers unless the impacts are essential for the development as a whole. Staff will generally not support impacts to regulated environmental features that are not associated with necessary road crossings or the installation of public utilities that are required to serve the development as a whole. If the impacts cannot be avoided, every attempt should be made to minimize the area of impact.

The submitted design proposes several impacts to regulated environmental features within the PMA. A letter of justification, stamped as received on April 3, 2012, has been reviewed. The request proposes the disturbance of 0.36 acre of stream buffer. The letter notes that there are three impacts, the exhibits submitted indicated that there are five impacts; however, a review of the exhibits and plans show that there are at least nine different impact types. Because most of these impacts overlap, an explanation of each impact type and staff's recommendations is provided below.

It should be noted that part of this site is currently developed and that all of the proposed impacts are within the existing developed area; however a significant part of the site is vegetated. This existing vegetated (grassed) area is to the rear of the existing buildings is proposed to be paved for surface parking and a drive aisle. The portion of the site that is undeveloped is fenced and will be preserved in its natural state with the exception of the storm drain outfall that will require retrofitting. The following is a summary of the impacts and exhibits submitted with the letter of justification, as well as the applicant's justification for each, and demonstration of avoidance and minimization. Staff's analysis is provided following this summary.

- (1) **Exhibit/Impact 1:** The letter requests impacts to grade the rear of the proposed structure (presently vegetated with grass) for the proposed building, surface parking spaces, and a drive aisle; however, in addition to these impacts, the associated exhibit (Exhibit 1) shows impacts for the a retaining wall, a dumpster enclosure, a storm drain system, median, curb, and sidewalk, which were not part of the request. The retaining wall was discussed in the applicant's justification. This impact area totals 0.15 acre and is located in the southwest area of the site.

**Justification:** The justification letter states that the existing conditions of the site are unique and there is an acute bend of the stream toward this site that further extends the PMA onto the developed area of the site. It also states that the "retaining wall trains the stream to realign within what should be the normal channel route." No justification was provided for the proposed dumpster enclosure, storm drain system, drive aisle, median, curb, and sidewalk.

**Avoidance/Minimization:** The letter states that the proposed building has been located close to the “normal” building restriction line (BRL) to avoid the impact, although no BRL is required under Section 27-445.10. Under the subject of minimization, it states that the parking was reduced to a 1:1 ratio. It also states that “the building was designed to keep the structure narrow.” The parking is designed as angled parking with one-way traffic movement to minimize the impervious area width required to support development.

- (2) **Exhibit/Impacts 2-3:** The letter requests impacts to disturb regulated environmental features for improvement to an existing storm drain pipe and outfall, and the installation of an underground stormwater treatment facility; however, the associated exhibit (Exhibit 2-3) also shows impacts for grading and paving of the existing vegetated area for angled surface parking spaces, a drive aisle, retaining wall, a storm drain pipe system, and a median, which were not requested.

**Justification:** The letter states that this impact is necessary to facilitate the proposed SWM measures to treat stormwater, where there is currently little to no treatment provided. The outfall improvements will ensure that the stormwater discharge is minimized, thus reducing erosion.

**Avoidance/Minimization:** The justification letter states that a new SWM system is being connected to the outfall system to avoid an additional impact to the stream buffer for an outfall, the building and parking are located as close to the existing street as possible, and the building has been designed to be as narrow as possible. It also states that “The area under the parking is linearly utilized to provide the necessary SWM facility, thus avoiding additional area requirement.” According to the letter, the total impacts have been reduced from 0.53 acre to 0.35 acre. It is unclear how this is possible when the plan shows existing impacted PMA to be entirely impacted.

- (3) **Exhibit/Impacts 4-5:** The letter indicates the impacts are for grading for access and parking to the site and a rear drive aisle. Also the requested impacts were not clearly stated. Exhibit 4-5 shows impacts for improvements to an existing parking lot, a retaining wall, angled surface parking spaces, a storm drain pipe system, vehicular entrance to the underground parking area, a gazebo, a portion of one of the proposed buildings, median, sidewalk, and curb, in addition to the access and rear drive aisle indicated.

**Justification:** The letter states that this impact is necessary to provide adequate access and parking, and that parking is needed to provide a minimum of 1:1 parking. It also states that the impact is created due to a road culvert conveying runoff to the stream. No justification was provided for the proposed buildings, median, sidewalk, curb, gazebo, and retaining wall in this area.

**Avoidance/Minimization:** The justification letter states that a new SWM system is being connected to the outfall system to avoid an additional impact to the stream buffer for an outfall, the building and parking are located as close to the existing street as possible, and the building has been designed to be as narrow as

possible. It also states that “The area under the parking is linearly utilized to provide the necessary SWM facility, thus avoiding additional area requirement.”

### **Mitigation**

The justification letter states that mitigation, in the form of stream restoration, is proposed along with the retaining wall. The stream restoration will include the existing outfall. No details regarding stream restoration were provided. It should be noted that a retaining wall is not a stream restoration measure, and its primary purpose is to anchor the site with respect to the existing adjacent slope, while providing a level site for development. Channel protection measures are required as a result of the need to improve the existing outfall with connection from the proposed outfall.

In a letter dated June 22, 2012 submitted by the applicant, the proposal of pervious pavers in the rear of the proposed buildings was included. The submitted 8 by 11 site plan shows the proposed site, with the rear surface parking spaces highlighted in pink, rear drive aisle and dumpster area highlighted in blue, and the side drive aisles and existing parking lot area highlighted in green. It appears as though the areas proposed to be developed with pervious pavers are only the surface parking areas.

The current Environmental Technical Manual (ETM) provides guidance in determining if a site is designed to meet the threshold of “fullest extent possible.” The first step in the evaluation is determining if an impact is avoidable. If an impact cannot be avoided because it is necessary for the overall development, the next step is to minimize the impact. If an impact cannot be minimized, mitigation may be considered (if proffered) depending on the extent of the impact.

The ETM also gives special guidance for evaluating impacts within the Developed Tier:

**Where properties are located in the Developed Tier or a designated center or corridor, impacts to regulated environmental features may be considered where needed to accommodate planned development on constrained sites. Such impacts may include allowing impervious surfaces to remain within the buffer or the placement of structures within a currently unvegetated buffer. Preservation of existing vegetated buffers will be a priority.**

The site is located in the Developed Tier, and is considered a constrained site due to its narrow configuration and the limited developable area as a result of the regulated environmental features that extend onto the site. Because the site is within the Developed Tier, and because of its constraints, some impact types which are generally not supported by staff will be unavoidable and challenging to minimize. The following is an analysis of each impact type. Some of these impacts are evaluated in combination with one or more types due to its association with each other.

- (1) **Retaining wall:** The retaining wall spans the entire rear of the site adjacent to the north side of the existing fence. The wall is necessary to bring the site to a developable grade. The current area within the rear of the existing buildings is not very level and slightly slopes in a southerly direction toward the stream. There are also areas of exposed corrugated pipe (possibly to drain rooftop runoff). The wall will span a height ranging from 1 foot to approximately 14 feet high. The highest area of the wall is in a location where the stream bank has experienced severe erosion. This is evident by the presence of gabion baskets

anchoring the stream bank and stream bed in this area observed during a field visit. The applicant indicates in the justification letter that the wall is also part of a stream restoration effort. Staff does not agree with this, as the only purpose for a retaining wall is to stabilize the soils where unsafe slopes occur and to prepare the site at a grade that is suitable for development. If no wall was proposed, stream restoration in this area would be necessary to reduce undercutting erosion and prevent bank failure for the safety of the site. While this is not considered a mitigation or stream restoration measure, the wall may contribute to controlling the erosive effects of stormwater on the site. Staff supports this impact.

- (2) **Stormwater management treatment facility and storm drain pipe system:** This underground facility is located to the rear of the proposed building on the eastern half of the site. The proposed storm drain pipes run along the rear of the proposed building in a horizontal direction and connect to the proposed underground facility. The purpose of the facility is to filter sediment and pollutants from the stormwater before it is discharged into the stream. The storm drain pipe system is necessary to safely convey stormwater to the facility. Impacts of these types are considered avoidable if it is determined that the site can be redesigned to place the facility outside of the PMA. Due to the narrow configuration of the site, these impacts are unavoidable and have been minimized to the extent possible. Staff supports this impact.
- (3) **Storm drain outfall improvement:** This impact is necessary to improve the existing storm drain and outfall that traverses the property and conveys street runoff to the stream. The proposed underground facility will also connect to this existing pipe. Staff supports this impact.
- (4) **Gazebo:** The proposed gazebo is located at the eastern section of the site at the most northern limit of the PMA. The gazebo is partially located in the area where a parking lot currently exists. This impact is unavoidable because the proposed building structure does not allow for much remaining developable area on the site. Staff supports this impact.
- (5) **Parking entrance, parking lot improvement, median, curb, and sidewalks:** The applicant proposes to provide parking in a garage underneath the building. An entrance to the garage is provided at both the east and west sides of the building. The entrance on the east side of the building impacts the PMA and is needed to enter the garage. The entrance on this side will also be associated with an improved parking lot where a parking lot currently exists. The parking lot will require significant upgrades, particularly where the pavement ends at the top of the slope adjacent to the stream. The soil underneath the pavement is eroding away. During the site visit, it was noted that areas of paving have been applied to patch eroded areas of the pavement. The new design should ensure better erosion protection for safety purposes. The proposed curb and sidewalk on the east side are needed to provide safe pedestrian passage to the adjacent parking lot. Staff supports these impacts.
- (6) **Proposed Building:** The plan and exhibit show a small portion of the proposed building impacting the PMA. Due to the significant site constraints, staff supports this impact; however, a letter from DPW&T dated January 6, 2012 states, "No structures are allowed within 25 feet of the floodplain." The proposed

building shown on the east side of the property is within 25 feet of the floodplain. This is also stated in the approved concept letter. The plans indicate that a small portion of the building may be within 25 feet of the floodplain. The plans must be revised to remove all structures from within 25 feet of the 100-year floodplain.

- (7) **Dumpster Enclosure:** The dumpster enclosure is located in the southwest corner of the site. The existing dumpster is located at the rear of the existing parking lot where garbage trucks have easy access to unload the dumpster. The proposed dumpster's location for this site plan would necessitate paving a drive aisle to access the dumpster. This impact can be avoided and the overall impacts can be minimized by relocating the dumpster in the vicinity of the existing dumpster and parking lot. This impact is not supported because it can be avoided and would needlessly impact the site with more paving.
- (8) **Pull-in parking and drive-through aisle:** The applicant proposes to provide 33 pull-in parking spaces at the rear of the proposed building. Approximately 19 of the parking spaces are in areas of the PMA. The parking spaces span the entire length of the southern side of the proposed building. A majority of the rear of the building is within the PMA. The 19 parking spaces, as well as the remaining 14 spaces, are not supported because it would require that the entire rear area of the building be paved, permanently removing the vegetative connection to the stream valley, generating increased runoff, and also generating increased pollutants as a result of fluids leaking from the parked vehicles. These impacts are not supported because they can be avoided and will result in the need to pave the entire rear area of the proposed building, which is currently vegetated with grass. Additional discussion of this impact is provided in the summary section below.

### **Summary and Conclusion of Proposed Impacts**

As previously discussed, the site is very constrained. The site has a horizontal width of approximately 680 feet and a vertical width of 150 feet, which is considerably narrow. Additionally, approximately 25 percent of the area along the southern boundary is within the PMA and contains steep slopes, which further constrains the site and limits the area of development. No stream restoration is proposed beyond what is required of the proposed outfall improvement; however, the proposed retaining wall may help stabilize the bank of the stream in the area where severe erosive forces occur near the southwest area of the site. The presence of gabion baskets along the bank of the stream indicates that some stream restoration efforts have been made to alleviate this problem. It is very clear that erosion is a serious problem along this stream, as other bank stabilization measures were exhibited on other sites downstream. Future maintenance to this area may be necessary if a comprehensive stream restoration plan is not implemented for the entire reach of the stream.

The retaining wall is necessary to bring the site to a suitable grade for development. The area of the existing surface parking lot (proposed for improvements) also serves as the entrance to the proposed underground parking garage and is also necessary for development. The stormwater treatment facility is required by code and has been placed in the most appropriate location to convey on-site runoff generated from other areas of the site through a necessary storm drain system. The gazebo has been placed as far outside of the PMA as possible. The improvements to the existing storm drain outfall are

necessary to safely convey water to the stream and reduce the current erosion problem along the bank of the stream in that area.

With regard to the proposed dumpster, pull-in parking spaces, and rear drive-through aisle, the proposed design as shown on the exhibits, TCP2, and detailed site plan does not demonstrate the preservation and/or restoration of the regulated environmental features to the fullest extent possible.

As discussed previously, the dumpster enclosure should be relocated to the location of the existing dumpster to avoid the need for an additional drive-through to access the dumpster. With regard to the rear parking spaces and drive-through aisle that spans the southern area of the building, these impacts can be avoided by providing an additional level of parking underneath the proposed building or reducing the proposed number of units to a number that is appropriate for a constrained site such as this. In the submitted letter of justification, the applicant states:

“We do need to maintain a 1:1 parking ratio for the site so with 84 spaces under the building, we need 43 in the rear. The spaces on the street cannot be guaranteed as parking is in the right-of-way.”

The Residential Revitalization code (Section 27-445.10) allows for unlimited density, which is causing over development of the site. The plan proposes 125 units (51 units per acre) with 148 parking spaces, at least one parking space to accommodate each proposed unit. Comparison of the project to one in the R-18 Zone (which is the comparable zone based on the product type being proposed in the subject application i.e. over 36 feet in building height), only 48 units would be allowed at the maximum allowed of 20 units per acre. While staff recognizes the code's desire to create an incentive to do residential revitalization by relaxing the density limits (among other things), consideration should be given to balancing the sensitive environmental features on the site with the limited developable area and determine the most suitable development for such a constrained site.

The guidance provided in the ETM gives consideration to existing non-vegetated areas for impacts on constrained sites within the Developed Tier; therefore, the area that is currently vegetated should not be considered for new impacts with paving. The parking spaces and driveway proposed at the rear of the building would replace existing vegetation that would contribute to maintaining the environmental health of the stream and maintain an enhanced vegetated (green) connection to the adjacent stream valley. Additionally, this configuration would interfere with the use and enjoyment of the stream and planned outdoor recreational facilities, by creating noise and traffic impacts.

During the site visit on June 7, it was noted that the property west of the site, a multifamily building called Quincy Village that has been present since 1977, was also developed with parking at the rear of the building; however, the parking is closed off to residents and appears to have been prevented from use for quite some time. According to the site's management office, the existing parking in the rear of this building was banned because there were, and still remain, concerns about slope stability after the earthquake that occurred on August 23, 2011.

The proposed surface parking spaces to the rear of the building should be removed or relocated. The spaces will result in a need to provide a paved area that would increase

polluted runoff and flow directly into the stream because it appears that the proposed storm drain facility will only treat runoff entering storm drain inlets at the east and west sides of the proposed buildings, and not the rear. The location of the dumpster will required the need for a garbage truck to access it and it should also be relocated. The removal and/or relocation of these design features, and the redesign of the rear area of the proposed building with a vegetated/grassed surface, would demonstrate that the design has preserved and/or restored the regulated environmental features to the fullest extent possible.

With regard to the proposed permeable paving for the proposed surface parking spaces in the rear, permeable pavers are not very effective in high traffic areas, and they tend to clog very fast and do not maintain its porosity over a long period of time. They become ineffective due to lack of adequate and frequent maintenance. Because these pavers are proposed for parking areas, the efficiency of these pavers are also questionable as it is expected for the pavers to be covered by vehicles most of the time due to the low parking ratio. It would also result in the leakage of fuel and other vehicular fluids characteristic of parked cars.

Based on the proposed design, staff cannot make a finding that the proposed design is in conformance with the recommendations of the Port Towns Sector Plan and the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan unless the proposed paving is replaced with a vegetative surface.

**Recommended Condition:** Prior to certificate approval of the detailed site plan, the plans shall be revised to remove the proposed angled surface parking spaces, drive aisle, dumpster, median, sidewalk, curb and all associated paving from the area on the southern side of the proposed building. There shall be no parking allowed in the rear of the proposed building. That area shall be vegetated with grass and the plans shall be revised as necessary to reflect this design.

**Recommended Condition:** Prior to issuance of the first grading permit, a conservation easement shall be described by bearings and distances and recorded in the land records. The conservation easement shall contain the delineated primary management area except for the area included in the approved impacts and shall be reviewed by the Environmental Planning Section prior to recordation. The following note shall be placed on the recorded easement document:

“Conservation easements described on this plat are areas where the installation of structures and roads and the removal of vegetation are prohibited without prior written consent from the M-NCPPC Planning Director or designee. The removal of hazardous trees, limbs, branches, or trunks is allowed.”

**Urban Design Comment:** According to the USDA Web Soil Survey, the principal soils on this site are in the Christiana-Downer-Urban Land Complex. According to the stormwater management concept approval letter, a geotechnical report will be required at the time of approval of a building permit for the project.

This information is provided for the applicant’s benefit. The county may require a soils report in conformance with CB-94-2004 during the building permit review process.

The Environmental Planning Section's suggested conditions have been included in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

- i. **The Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department**—In a memorandum dated January 20, 2012, the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department offered information regarding needed access, private road design, and the location and performance of fire hydrants.
- j. **The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T)**—In a memorandum dated January 6, 2012, DPW&T offered numerous comments that will be addressed during their separate permitting process. Of note with respect to the subject detailed site plan review, however, are the following:
  - The existing perpendicular parking within the right-of-way will not be allowed.
  - No structures are allowed within 25 feet of the floodplain. The proposed building shown on the east side of the property is within 25 feet of the floodplain.
  - The proposed site plan is consistent with approved Stormwater Management Concept Plan 22617-2007 dated October 5, 2010.

**Comment:** Recommended conditions below would require elimination of the existing perpendicular parking within the right-of-way and no structures are allowed within 25 feet of the floodplain. The subject plan's consistency with the approved stormwater concept plan is herein noted.

- k. **The Prince George's County Police Department**—In a memorandum dated May 25, 2012, the Prince George's County Police Department noted that Sheet 5 of the plan set indicates placement of a proposed gazebo and picnic and play area for the Monroe Gardens development. Then, they stated that while they do not object to the placement, they would suggest that sight lines to the recreational facility not be blocked by landscaping. One of the proposed shrubs to be planted is Redtip Photinia, which is a fast growing evergreen privacy hedge and, since they were concerned that visibility might be inhibited by the shrub, suggested that it be replaced with a slower growing shrub, or be moved to the rear of the recreational area along the existing tree line, for additional boundary definition. Also, they recommended changing the access point to the recreational facilities from the public sidewalk to the adjacent asphalt parking lot to define ownership and limit the access of non-residents to the recreational area.

The above comments are based on the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principle known as natural surveillance, which limits the opportunity for crime by taking steps to increase the perception that people can be seen. Natural surveillance occurs by designing the placement of physical features, activities, and people in such a way as to maximize visibility and foster positive social interaction. Potential offenders feel increased scrutiny and limitations on their escape routes. In a nutshell, the principle can be stated as "seeing and being seen." Parents should be able to observe their children when they are playing on the facilities, while persons intent on utilizing the facilities for other than their intended purpose are made to feel uncomfortable in doing so because they know they can be observed as well.

1. **The Prince George’s County Health Department**—In a memorandum dated June 13, 2012, the Prince George’s County Health Department stated that they had completed a health impact assessment review of the detailed site plan submission for Monroe Gardens, and had the following comments and recommendations:
  - There is an increasing body of scientific research suggesting that artificial light pollution can have lasting adverse impacts on human health. Therefore, the Health Department suggested that the applicant indicate that all proposed exterior light fixtures be shielded and positioned so as to minimize light trespass caused by spill light. Light levels at residential property lines should not exceed 0.5 footcandles.
  - This property is located in an area of the county considered a “food desert,” where healthy and affordable food is difficult to obtain. Within a one-half mile radius of this location, there are twelve carry-out/convenience store food facilities, but no markets or grocery stores. Research has found that people who live near an abundance of fast-food restaurants and convenience stores compared to grocery stores and fresh produce vendors, have a significantly higher prevalence of obesity and diabetes.
  - During the demolition/construction phases of this project, no dust should be allowed to cross over property lines and impact persons on the adjacent properties. The applicant should indicate his intent to conform to construction activity dust control requirements as specified in the 2011 Maryland Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.
  - During the demotion/construction phases of this project, no noise should be allowed to adversely impact activities on the adjacent properties. The applicant should indicate his intent to conform to construction activity noise control requirements as specified in Subtitle 19 of the Prince George’s County Code.

The Prince George’s County Health Department’s comments have been included as appropriate in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report.

- m. **State Highway Administration (SHA)**—In comments received December 5, 2011, SHA stated that they have no objection to plan approval, as access is to a county road. However, they stated, if the county requires off-site improvements to a state road, an access permit would be required from the SHA’s Access Management Division.
- n. **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)**—In a memorandum dated December 15, 2011, WSSC offered numerous comments that will be addressed during their separate permitting process.
- o. **The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)**—In a letter received July 9, 2012, the Director of DHCD for Prince George’s County stated that they have reviewed the plan for the Monroe Gardens project and that it conforms with the housing goals and priorities for Prince George’s County as described in the current Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan.

- p. **The Towns/Cities of Edmonston, Riverdale Park, Cottage City, Landover Hills, and Colmar Manor**—The above-mentioned municipalities declined to comment on the subject project.
- q. **Town of Bladensburg**—In a letter dated July 10, 2012, the Mayor of the Town of Bladensburg expressed the Town’s full support for the subject project. Noting that the applicant has worked with the Town for quite some time, he praised the project as a redevelopment effort in keeping with the goals and objectives of the applicable Port Towns Sector Plan, which would serve to revitalize the housing stock in the community with quality development offering amenities to residents.
- r. **The City of Hyattsville**—In an e-mail dated December 2, 2011, a representative of the City of Hyattsville stated that they would not be submitting comment regarding the subject application.
- s. **The City of Cheverly**—In a letter dated December 15, 2011, the Mayor the Town of Cheverly offered the following regarding the Monroe Gardens project:

“On Tuesday December 13th a meeting was held to discuss the Detailed Site Plan for Monroe Gardens (DSP-10045). In attendance was a quorum of the Cheverly Planning Board, members of the Green Infrastructure Committee, concerned Cheverly residents as well as Council Member David Thorpe and Mayor Michael Callahan. The contents of this note have been shared with the entire Planning Board and members of the Town Council.

“We were unable to take an official Town Council vote due to the very short public notice provided. We will take that vote in our January Public meeting.

“Summary Position: As with other revitalization proposals for this area, the Town of Cheverly sees redevelopment as a positive action. This proposal represents one of the first significant redevelopment efforts in the unincorporated area between Cheverly and Bladensburg, and it is the Town of Cheverly’s hope that it set a high standard for other proposals that will potentially improve our community as well as Prince George’s County.

“We used a guiding principle in our analysis of the DSP objectives from the New Carrollton Bladensburg Master Plan. One specific objective from Page 13 of the plan seemed particularly appropriate; *‘To locate development according to opportunities and constraints presented by the local environmental characteristics.’*

“We found the developer’s plan at odds with this objective. Even the developer acknowledges that this development does not adhere to the ‘constraints of the environmental characteristics’ on page 5 of their submission. The developer requests a variance from parking ordinances with the statement, *‘This narrow lot creates a situation in which there is limited space for the building and parking under today’s standards. Furthermore, the site is traversed by the stream and the accompanying floodplain and stream buffers on the site create a situation in which only a very limited area of the site can be developed.’*

“In our review of this DSP, clearly this site does not support the scope and size of the developer’s proposal. Therefore it is our position that the DSP be rejected unless significant changes are made to the plans that would protect Quincy Run and provide adequate recreation resources to the residents of the development. It would seem unlikely these goals could be achieved without significantly altering the structure of the building and decreasing the density of the development.

“Environmental Impact:

- “1) Existing Conditions: Quincy Run is a stream that directly abuts this property, and flows directly to the Anacostia River and to the Chesapeake Bay. Quincy Run is currently extremely degraded with severe erosion and damage to existing retaining walls and storm drains upstream and downstream.

“The Town of Cheverly and the National Park Service have plans to remove 4 homes from the headwaters of this stream in an effort to improve water quality and reduce the velocity and volume of runoff to prevent continuing damage to the stream.

“Developments such as Newton Green (recently built) and Monroe Gardens (not built) continue to exacerbate the erosion problems. The result of erosion can be found at the mouth of the stream where it is silted in.

- “2) Building Footprint: According to the site plans the building footprint is being doubled to support the increased density. The increased footprint dramatically affects the land’s ability to absorb and filter stormwater runoff. The plans show no drainage plans or even drain pipes. Installation of an underground stormwater storage device (as indicated on one drawing) within the extensive fill area behind the massive retaining wall is a highly inferior, last resort approach to runoff reduction. If ever there is a site calling out for a green roof and advanced use of environmental site design, this it.

- “3) Impervious Surface: Not only is the building footprint doubling, the plans also show that virtually the entire site will be covered with impervious surfaces in the form of buildings or surface parking. Today there is approximately an average of 50 feet of grassy area between the structures and the stream bed. Instead of restoring this to a forested stream buffer this will be completely eliminated. There is no stormwater plan with calculations of current and expanded runoff and plans for onsite treatment, so the obvious implication is that there will be serious erosion and damage to downstream neighboring properties.

- “4) Encroachment on Quincy Run: In order to accommodate the planned parking the developer has extended the south western corner of the development by approximately 30 feet. This is accomplished by extending the retaining wall and placing fill behind it. This massive wall appears to extend into the existing stream area and will cause a redirection of the existing stream. This will further contribute to

increased water flow, increased erosion and channelization of Quincy Run. Again this creates property and stream damage downstream.

- “5) Retention Wall: Not only will the retention wall (apparently 16 feet high in some places) encroach on the streambed, it extends well beyond the Primary Management Area (PMA). The PMA is drawn on the map, but is omitted from the associated text. This major reconfiguration of the stream bank does not appear to be an ecologically feasible or friendly strategy to improve the stream at this site and will only serve to increase damage downstream. Given the damage to existing retention walls along the stream, how will the developer insure the long term integrity of the structure?

“Resident Quality of Life:

- “1) Recreation Space: The developer is planning 127 units for sale but has not allocated any space to meeting or exercise areas. This lack of internal facilities places significant stress when the 318 planned residents are looking for activity. Especially since the nearest public facility (Bladensburg Community Center) is a 1 mile walk.

“The developer has allocated \$120K for investment in recreational facilities (according to formula). However, there is no property nearby that could be purchased to provide recreation.

“The existing 2.5 acre site currently contains approximately 1.5 acres of grassy area surrounding the buildings. This is area that can be used for playing, sitting or barbecuing. However, when this site is ‘revitalized’ all that space will be gone. The developer consistently mentions the upgrading of the ‘post World War II structures’ however the area for outdoor recreation and enjoyment will be eliminated.

- “2) Density: The revitalization code creates a minimum threshold of 12 units per acre and does not have a stated maximum. This plan calls for 52 units per acre. The land is not large enough to support this type of density while protecting the environmental integrity of the site without creating a much taller structure with a much smaller footprint. Aside from ‘common sense’ issues caused by such density, obvious objective data puts such density plans into question. For example, the planned parking does not support the amount of units being planned. Even with the 30% parking reduction provided by code, the developer needs another variance for 14% more. This request comes in spite of using virtually the entire site as a parking lot.

- “3) Transportation: This site is only supported by bus transportation and there is a scarcity of nearby employers. While some residents may use the bus line for transportation to the subway it is unlikely this development will attract residents without automobiles. While public transportation may alleviate parking requirements, there is no mention of plans to improve sidewalks, bus stops or Metro access.

“Recommendations:

- “1) Significantly reduce the impervious surface area of the project (on the order of 40% or more) from the current plans.
- “2) Design the project to recognize Quincy Run as an amenity and include first rate stream restoration design that results in improvements in the quality and character of the stream.
- “3) Require the developer to provide on-site recreational facilities.
- “4) That the Bladensburg and Cheverly Police Departments and Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Departments be asked for comment regarding public safety issues.

“In conclusion, we reiterate that any development of the Monroe Gardens site proceed ‘according to opportunities and constraints presented by the local environmental characteristics.’ In this case the overriding site design factor is the location and condition of Quincy Run.

“This proposal is a major disappointment from conception to design. It is not the quality proposal that the community requires and deserves, but will be a liability to the community, to taxpayers, and undermines the massive cooperative effort now underway to restore the Anacostia River and Chesapeake Bay. This proposal should not proceed as designed.”

In a subsequent letter, dated July 11, 2012, the Mayor of the Town of Cheverly offered the following:

“In the June 21st Cheverly Town Council Meeting, the Council voted unanimously to approve the December 15th letter previously submitted to the Prince George’s County Planning and to submit an addendum asking once again for the Planning Board to reject the existing Detailed Site Plan (DSP-10045) for the Monroe Gardens Development.

“We believe the Monroe Garden Development as planned will degrade the Quincy Run stream beyond repair. The Town of Cheverly requests the Planning Board to reject DSP-10045 unless the developer agrees to remove all parking and pavement from the rear of the building.

“Below is an addendum to our original statement dated December 15th. Recently the developer suggested modifications that will improve the site, such as; completely pervious parking areas, and the potential to add a green roof. The developer also conducted an on-site meeting which clarified a number of items concerning the storm water plan. However, the Cheverly’s request remains the same: remove all parking from the rear of the building.

“Summary Statement: The Town of Cheverly supports any and all projects that will indeed revitalize our surrounding areas. The phrase urban revitalization is defined as *‘the process of rebuilding thriving economically, environmentally and socially sustainable urban areas and populations, in areas that have been in*

*decline and in those urban areas that are stressed from the continuing influx of people to urban areas.’*

“Unfortunately, Section 27-445.10 Residential Revitalization fails to include a single requirement that addresses that definition. Instead the single driving requirement in the code is that to qualify for revitalization the development must have density of 12 units per acre.

“The developer is invoking the Residential Revitalization section to triple the number existing apartments from approximately 42 to 127. Growth of this magnitude, alongside an already stressed stream bed requires thoughtful implementation. Instead DSP-10045 simply expands the footprint of the existing buildings and then paves the remaining area for parking. This DSP that is being submitted under the Revitalization Section, will result in the degradation of the stream and will thus continue the decay of the entire area.

“Therefore we ask that you carefully inspect the Finding 4) Benefits project residents and property owners the neighborhood or community. This project simply does not meet that standard. The project as currently defined will accelerate the deterioration of Quincy Run and therefore impact every resident of the area. However, residents living downstream will suffer significantly as witnessed by the recent WSSC project that was required to save sewer pipes impacted by storm run off.

“Therefore we ask that you disapprove this request until all pavement behind the building is eliminated. This can be accomplished by simply requiring structured parking at the site and requiring that all needed parking is placed under the structure.

“Furthermore, this suggestion may actually assist the developer when he sells the units as security concerns still exist in this area. If all parking is underground the developer will be able to sell the concept of security and convenience to future residents.”

- t. **The Friends of Lower Beaverdam Creek and Progressive Cheverly**—These two citizen groups have remained active, together with the City of Cheverly throughout and in opposition to the proposed project.
  - u. **Parke Cheverly Apartments, LLC**—In a letter dated July 2, 2012, a representative of Parke Cheverly Apartments, LCC, an adjacent property owner, stated that she was very encouraged by the efforts of the applicant to redevelop the Post WWII complex stating that it would revitalize the neighborhood, provide high-quality amenities, and housing as well as help protect the stream valley.
12. Based on the foregoing and as required by Section 27-285(b) of the Zoning Ordinance, the detailed site plan will, if approved in accordance with the proposed conditions below, represent 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.

13. Per Section 27-285(b)(4) of the Zoning Ordinance, which became effective on September 1, 2010, 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.**

In a memorandum dated June 27, 2012, the Environmental Planning Section indicated that if plans are revised to remove the proposed parking spaces, paving, drive aisle, dumpster, and the associated sidewalk and curb from the area on the southern side of the proposed building and show the area to be vegetated with grass, and if the applicant places a conservation easement over the delineated primary management area except for the area included in the approved impacts as detailed in their memorandum, then it may be said that the regulated environmental features have been preserved and/or restored in a natural state to the fullest extent possible. As conditions in this regard have been included in the Recommendation section of this technical staff report, the Urban Design Section recommends that the Planning Board make the above finding in the subject case.

14. In approving a residential revitalization project, the Planning Board must make the following findings as per Section 27-445.10 of the Zoning Ordinance. Each required finding is listed in **boldface** type below, followed by staff comment:

- (1) **Improves a deteriorated, obsolete, or demolished multifamily or attached one-family dwelling unit development by replacing or rehabilitating dwellings, improving structures, or renovating and improving other facilities;**

**Comment:** The subject project would replace antiquated 1950's multifamily units on the site and offer both indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for the residents.

- (2) **Maintains or improves the architectural character of the buildings so that they are compatible with surrounding properties;**

**Comment:** The proposed architecture is in keeping with the multifamily housing stock surrounding the site, but improves it by providing an updated product offering amenities to residents.

- (3) **Serves a need for housing in the neighborhood or community;**

**Comment:** The need for housing is well documented by virtue of the fact that the existing housing on the site, though antiquated, is currently almost fully occupied.

- (4) **Benefits project residents and property owners in the neighborhood;**

**Comment:** The project would benefit residents by providing new housing stock and the following recreational facilities: Wi-Fi, exercise and common restroom facilities, a gazebo, barbeque grills, picnic tables, and play equipment. The project would benefit property owners in the neighborhood by increasing the value of neighborhood comparables, possibly increasing neighborhood real estate values, and by providing architecture that will be a visual asset for the neighborhood. Proposed conditions below that would remove parking and paved surfaces from the rear of the building and probably reduce the density of the project would also benefit residents of the project and the neighborhood by improving the parking situation generally, when compared

to the applicant's original proposal, and by mitigating conditions that would contribute to further degradation of Quincy Run.

- (5) Conforms with the housing goals and priorities as described in the current “Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan,” for Prince George’s County; and**

**Comment:** In a letter received July 9, 2012, the Director of the Prince George’s County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) stated that the project conforms to the housing goals and priorities as described in the current Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan.

- (6) Conforms to either specific land use recommendations or principles and guidelines for residential development within the applicable Master Plan.**

**Comment:** In a memorandum dated July 6, 2012, the Community Planning North Division stated that the subject application conforms to the residential medium-high land use recommendations of the 2009 Approved Port Towns Sector Plan. Recommended conditions of this approval would ensure that the project is also in accordance with the other guidelines included in the Sector Plan for residential development.

## 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-10045 and Type 2 Tree Conservation Plan TCP2-003-12 for Monroe Gardens—Quincy subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to signature approval of the plans for the project, the applicant shall:
  - a. Remove the parking and impervious surfaces at the rear of the two proposed buildings (including the drive aisle, dumpster pad, median, sidewalk, and curb) and provide a grassed or otherwise vegetated surface. No parking shall be allowed to the rear of the proposed buildings.
  - b. Establish a maximum impervious surface percentage to be utilized in the development proposal, minimizing impervious area by the required removal of the parking from the rear, the use of alternative pavers, soil amendments and conditioning, bioretention areas, roof top gardens, and other landscaping techniques that increase infiltration. The Environmental Planning Section, as designee of the Planning Board, shall review and approve revisions to the plans to accomplish the above.
  - c. Revise the plans to include only as many units as there are parking spaces provided and revise the parking schedule accordingly. The parallel parking spaces to be placed in the public right-of-way along the subject project’s Quincy Street frontage may be utilized in this calculation. The number of dwelling units shall be reduced if necessary such that no less than one parking space per dwelling unit is provided for the project.
  - d. Provide a representative floor plan of a typical unit in the existing housing complex.

- e. Provide photographs of the four façades of a typical building and the interior of a typical apartment unit in the existing housing complex.
- f. Reflect the bearings and distances of the 12-foot recorded storm and sewer easement as shown on Record Plat 30-18 on the plans for the project.
- g. If road frontage improvements are required by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) along the subject site's Quincy Street frontage, construct a minimum six-foot-wide sidewalk along the entire subject property frontage, with a minimum seven-foot-wide landscape area between the sidewalk and the curb to separate the sidewalk from the road and parking, unless modified by DPW&T.
- h. Provide ADA-accessible (Americans with Disabilities Act) sidewalk ramps along the Quincy Street frontage.
- i. Include a note on the detailed site plan stating: "The applicant and the applicant's heirs, successors, and/or assignees shall provide a financial contribution of \$210 to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) for placement of a 'Share the Road with a Bike' warning sign along Quincy Street." The signage will consist of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) W11-1 bicycle warning sign coupled with a W16-1P plaque, unless modified by DPW&T.
- j. Indicate three concrete pad bicycle parking locations utilizing U-shaped bicycle racks in locations in close proximity to the main building entrances and within the parking garage.
- k. Indicate throughout the plan set that all proposed exterior light fixtures will be shielded and positioned so as to minimize light trespass caused by spill light.
- l. Include a note on the plans that during the demolition/construction phases of the project:
  - (1) All reasonable precautions shall be taken to prevent dust from crossing over property lines and impacting adjacent properties and that the applicant shall conform to the construction activity dust control requirements specified in the 2011 Maryland Standards and Specifications for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control; and
  - (2) All reasonable precautions shall be taken to prevent noise from adversely impacting activities on the adjacent properties and the applicant shall conform to the construction activity noise control requirements as specified in Subtitle 19 of the Prince George's County Code.
- m. The approved stormwater management concept plan shall be submitted and correctly indicated throughout the plan set.
- n. Revise the Type 2 tree conservation plan (TCP2) to show the correct woodland conservation threshold on the worksheet and remove the planting notes for landscaping and afforestation/reforestation from the plan.

- o. Revise the plans to remove the indicated perpendicular parking in the right-of-way of Quincy Street on the northern side of the subject project and ensure that both buildings included in the subject plan maintain a minimum distance of 25 feet from the floodplain located to the south of the proposed buildings.
- p. The chart entitled “Landscape Requirements for Monroe Gardens—Quincy” shall be retitled “Plant List” or “Plant Schedule” as the requirement is referred to in Section 2.2(a)(5) of the 2010 *Prince George’s County Landscape Manual*.
- q. A column shall be added to the plant list or plant schedule to provide information regarding whether each plant material is native, as required by Section 4.9(c)(2) of the 2010 *Prince George’s County Landscape Manual*. The applicant shall include the native evergreen Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia gandiflora* Edith Bogue) in the plant schedule in sufficient proportion to ensure year-round visual interest of the landscaping. Final approval of the schedule shall be by the Urban Design Section as designee of the Planning Board.
- r. Should the parking lot to the rear of the building be retained in the project’s final approval, the applicant shall redesign the parking lot to conform to the requirement of Section 4.3(c)(2)(G) of the 2010 *Prince George’s County Landscape Manual* which requires a minimum of one interior planting island on average for every ten contiguous parking spaces. Should the number of parking spaces be reduced by the inclusion of the planting islands, the parking schedule on the plans shall be revised accordingly.
- s. The applicant shall revise the plant list or plant schedule to include exclusively native plantings in order to implement conservation landscaping techniques that reduce water consumption and the need for fertilizers or chemical applications.
- t. The applicant shall add a note to the plans stating that:
  - “The indoor recreational facilities/amenities for the project shall include:
    - “• A 320-square-foot (minimum) Wi-Fi room including four computers, printers, scanners, copiers, and fax machines;
    - “• A 720-square-foot (minimum) exercise room, including three full sets of free weights, two elliptical, one treadmill, one standing bike, and two multi-weight strength building machines; and
    - “• Men and women’s restroom facilities.
  - “Outdoor recreational facilities shall include:
    - “• A 500-square-foot handicap-accessible gazebo;
    - “• Five barbeque grills;
    - “• Five picnic tables; and
    - “• A tot-lot, designed and constructed in accordance with Prince George’s County Parks and Recreation Guidelines.”

- u. The applicant shall provide a floor plan of Building 2 indicating the precise location of the indoor recreational facilities and shall revise the site plan to show the precise location of the outdoor recreational facilities. These revisions shall be approved by the Urban Design Section as designee of the Planning Board.
- v. The length and width of both buildings shall be dimensioned on the plan set.
- w. The parking schedule shall be revised to include the number of handicap parking spaces, including the number of van-accessible spaces.
- x. A dimensioned typical detail of a standard, compact, handicap, and van-accessible handicap parking space shall be included in the plan set.
- y. All compact parking spaces shall be marked as such and the manner of marking shall be indicated on the site plan and approved by the Urban Design Section as designee of the Planning Board.
- z. A safety rail or fence shall be provided along the top of the retaining wall and the plans shall be revised to reflect its location. Also, a detail of the safety rail or fence, of the height required in the building code, shall be included in the plan set. Final design of said safety rail or fence shall be approved by the Urban Design Section as designee of the Planning Board.
- aa. The architecture of the sides and rears of the buildings shall be improved by creating a varied roofline as is provided on the front façade, keystones in the rowlocks above all the windows, and/or inclusion of one or more of the grey glazed rectilinear elements as is provided on the front façade. Final design of the architecture of the sides and rears shall be approved by the Urban Design Section as designee of the Planning Board.
- bb. The applicant shall include two or more of the following environmentally-sensitive building techniques to reduce overall energy consumption: use of all Energy Star appliances, specially coated High E (energy efficient) glass, increasing the normal building insulation in the roof and walls to a higher than normal grade, and/or installing solar panels.
- cc. The applicant shall add a note to the plans indicating that all proposed exterior light fixtures shall be shielded and positioned so as to minimize light trespass caused by spill light.
- dd. The applicant shall revise the proposed shrubs adjacent to the tot lot from Redtip Photinia to a slower-growing native evergreen, or relocate this fast-growing shrub in order to improve visibility of the play area.
- ee. Actual bedroom percentages shall be added as a general note to the detailed site plan.
- ff. The Type 2 tree conservation plan (TCP2) shall be revised to show the correct woodland conservation threshold on the worksheet. The planting notes for landscaping and afforestation/reforestation shall be removed from the plan.

2. If a final plat is approved, a note shall be included thereon stating that payment for the required “Share the Road with a Bike” sign shall be received by the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) prior to issuance of the first building permit.
3. Prior to issuance of the first building permit for the project, the applicant shall:
  - a. Make the required \$210 payment to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) for the required “Share the Road with a Bike” sign.
  - b. Undertake and pay for mitigation efforts in an identified ecologically significant restoration project needed along the site’s adjacency of Quincy Run that shall include an expanded buffer along Quincy Run for preservation of open space and to utilize it as a stormwater management strategy that will function as a public amenity. The scope of the mitigation efforts shall be approved by the Environmental Planning Section as designee of the Planning Board.
4. Prior to issuance of the first grading permit for the project:
  - a. If it is determined that Specimen Tree 4 needs to be removed due to the proposed grading in the critical root zone, a variance to remove the tree shall be submitted and reviewed by the Planning Director or her designee.
  - b. A conservation easement shall be described by bearings and distances and recorded in the land records. The conservation easement shall contain the delineated primary management area except for the area included in the approved impacts and shall be reviewed by the Environmental Planning Section prior to recordation. The following note shall be placed on the recorded easement document:

“Conservation easements described on this plat are areas where the installation of structures and roads and the removal of vegetation are prohibited without prior written consent from the M-NCPPC Planning Director or designee. The removal of hazardous trees, limbs, branches, or trunks is allowed.”