



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
 THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB #
MCPB 9-27-07

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 14, 2007
 TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
 VIA: Rose Krasnow, Chief *RdK*
 Development Review Division
 FROM: Robert A. Kronenberg, Acting *RAK*
 Supervisor
 Development Review Division
 (301) 495-2187



REVIEW TYPE: **Site Plan Amendment**
 CASE #: **81989049F**
 PROJECT NAME: Rock Spring Park
 APPLYING FOR: Amendment to 1) revise the footprint, massing and elevation of Buildings 1A and 1B; 2) modify the footprints of parking structures no. 3 and 4; and 3) revise the landscape and hardscape elements associated with the changes to the buildings and parking structure.

REVIEW BASIS: Div. 59-D-2.6 of Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance for Minor Plan Amendments

ZONE: I-3

LOCATION: Located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection with Rockledge Drive and Fernwood Road

MASTER PLAN: North Potomac/Garrett Park Master Plan

APPLICANT: Rock Spring Park, LLC c/o Opus East LLC

FILING DATE: May 29, 2007

HEARING DATE: September 27, 2007

BACKGROUND

Site Plans

The Site Plan (819890490) for Rock Spring Park was presented to the Planning Board on April 11, 1991 (Planning Board Opinion dated April 17, 1991) for approval of 1,635,100 square feet (0.85 FAR) of commercial office in the I-3 Zone. The Certified Site Plan was approved on November 15, 1991.

An amended Site Plan (81989049A) for Rock Spring Park was presented to the Planning Board on November 12, 1998 (Planning Board Opinion dated February 22, 1999) for approval of 1,635,100 square feet (0.85 FAR) of commercial office in the I-3 Zone.

An amended Site Plan (81989049B) for Rock Spring Park was presented concurrently with the preliminary plan (#1-98093E) to the Planning Board on January 24, 2002 for an extension of the validity period.

An amended Site Plan (81989049C) for Rock Spring Park was approved on February 27, 2004 to provide for an emergency generator for the office buildings.

An amended Site Plan (81989049D) for Rock Spring Park was approved on October 4, 2005 to modify the phasing, modify the building layout for building number 2 and make minor changes to the grading for the stormwater management facility.

An amended Site Plan (81989049E) for Rock Spring Park was approved on May 10, 2007 to change the size of the planters in the garage, make minor grading changes to the stormwater management facility, and increase the size of the street trees.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **Approval** of the Site Plan Amendment (81990049F). The terms and conditions of all applicable prior regulatory approvals and agreements, including the approved Site Plan No. 81990049E, remain in full force and effect, except for the following modifications:

- 1) Revise the footprint, massing and elevation of Buildings 1A and 1B;
- 2) Modify the footprints of parking structures no. 3 and 4;
- 3) Revise the landscape and hardscape elements associated with the changes to the buildings and parking structure; and
- 4) Enter into a maintenance and liability agreement with Montgomery County for the plant material proposed within the 50-foot-wide transit easement. The agreement must be executed prior to release of the building permit for Buildings 1A and 1B (now shown as Buildings 3 and 4).

Analysis of the Limited Amendment

Applicant's Position

As the final design and engineering phase of this project proceeds, the Applicant is requesting modifications to the building layout and associated parking structures in order to enhance the overall appearance and function of the site.

The proposed amendment is a result of market changes and design considerations for the remaining buildings for their relationship with the existing uses. The Applicant requests modifications to the footprint and massing of Buildings 1A and 1B, which also necessitated revisions to the parking structures and associated landscape, hardscape and site features.

Staff Position

The modifications to the plan relocate the massing and shape of Buildings 1A and 1B (now referenced as Buildings 3 and 4) to better frame the intersection of Fernwood Road and Rockledge Drive. A greater emphasis is being placed on the building massing, orientation to the street and landscaping associated with the proposed reconfiguration. The Applicant is also proposing a green roof on approximately 50% of Buildings 3 and 4. The access point along Fernwood Road was modified slightly to provide access to both sides of parking structures 3A and 3B. The footprint of the parking structure (3A) was not significantly modified; however, the massing is more linear in nature. The footprint of parking structure (3B) was modified to become more rectangular to accommodate internal circulation, the number of parking spaces and the revised footprint of the proposed buildings to the west. The parking structures were originally approved for 100 feet in height but have been reduced to a maximum of 57 feet for garage 3A and 67.5 feet for garage 3B. The shape, massing and configuration of the structures have a direct impact on the reduced height. During the review process, Staff requested additional architectural treatments on the garage as well as additional landscaping along the façade adjacent to the two roads. The Applicant is proposing to preserve six large trees in front of the larger parking structure in addition to plant material and architectural treatments.

The modification to the internal circulation corresponds to the reconfiguration of the proposed buildings with respect to alignment and function, and offers better access to the two parking structures. The placement of the two buildings and parking structures respects the existing 50-foot-wide transit easement and associated setbacks that parallel Fernwood Road and Rock Spring Drive. Further, any landscaping or site improvements within this easement are considered temporary until such time as the County decides to construct the transit line through this area. The Applicant has agreed to enter into a maintenance and liability agreement for the material located within the easement.

The changes to the buildings and parking structures necessitated modifications to the approved landscape and hardscape treatment, primarily around the entry to the building and footprint of the structures.

The proposed amendment is consistent with the provisions of Section 59-D-2.6 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance for Minor Plan Amendments. The amendment does not alter the intent, objectives, or requirements expressed or imposed by the Planning Board for the originally approved site plan.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Letter from the Applicant dated February 27, 2007.
- B. Memoranda from agencies
- C. Site Vicinity and Description

ATTACHMENT A

ATTACHMENT B

Site Description and Vicinity

The 44.16-acre property is bounded by Fernwood Road to the south, Rock Spring Drive to the southeast and Rockledge Drive wrapping the northern and western boundaries. I-270 is located directly west of the site with a ramp connecting to Fernwood Road. The site is zoned I-3. Westfield Montgomery Mall is located ½ mile to the south and west with direct access from Fernwood Road. The site contains a number of mature trees and a recorded transit easement along the frontage of Fernwood Road and Rock Spring Drive.

The site currently contains three office buildings and a parking structure to accommodate the office tenants. Primary access to the office buildings exists from Rockledge Drive and Rock Spring Drive. The present construction accommodates two additional office buildings and a parking garage in the northwestern quadrant of Rockledge Drive. A stormwater management facility, which will also function as an amenity for the office park, is under construction in the center of the site.

