



November 14, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Laxmi Srinivas, Site Plan Reviewer
Development Review Division

VIA: Shahriar Etemadi, Supervisor
Transportation Planning

FROM: Ed Axler, Coordinator/Planner
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Site Plan No. 8-06004
Plaza Del Mercado
Aspen Hill Policy Area

EA

This memorandum is Transportation Planning staff's adequate public facilities (APF) review of the subject site plan located on recorded Lots 2, 3, and 4.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation Planning staff recommend the following conditions as part of the APF test for transportation requirements related to the approval of this site plan:

1. Limit the site plan to an expansion of 29,863 square feet for a maximum of 130,363 square feet of general retail uses that includes a supermarket.

2. Satisfy Local Area Transportation Review by adding a separate right-turn lane with a taper on the eastbound approach of Bel Pre Road at the intersection of Layhill Road in accordance with the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) requirements. Retain the median along Bel Pre Road with a pedestrian refuge across the intersection's crosswalk. Maintain the sidewalk on the north side and the Class I, off-road bike path not less than seven feet wide that should be located immediately adjacent to the curb on the south side. Modify the handicapped ramps, crosswalks, traffic signal installation and operation at this intersection as necessary and required by DPS. All improvements shall be complete and open to traffic prior to release of any use and occupancy permit for the renovated and expanded areas.
3. Enter into a Traffic Mitigation Agreement (TMAg), signed and executed by the Planning Board and the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) prior to approval of the signature set to effectively promote alternative modes of transportation to driving alone and parking within the shopping center. The TMAg shall include installation of a real-time transit sign at a location visible to employees and customers in the shopping center.
4. Provide 20 inverted-U bike racks (holding two bikes each) along the front of the stores.
5. Provide for a future access easement across the property line for adjoining property to the east.

DISCUSSION

Shopping Center Location and Access Points

The Plaza del Mercado Shopping Center is located on the north side of Bel Pre Road approximately 300 feet west of Layhill Road (MD 182). The five existing access points/driveways from Bel Pre Road are to remain. The second western-most driveway opposite Parker Farm Way is the only signalized intersection.

Requested Parking Waiver

Transportation Planning staff supports applicant's request for the parking waiver to provide 20% or 140 fewer parking spaces than required by County Code for the proposed retail land uses if the recommended condition number three for entering into a trip mitigation agreement is implemented.

Master-Planned Roadways and Bikeways

The master-planned roadways and bikeways are as follows:

1. Bel Pre Road is designated as an arterial (A-40) with a five-lane, 80-foot right-of-way and an existing Class I bikeway in the *Aspen Hill Master Plan*. A five-foot sidewalk exists along the north side. A shared-use path, SP-30, is recommended along the south side in the *Countywide Bikeway Functional Master Plan*.
2. Bonifant Road is designated as an arterial (A-40) with a two-lane, 80-foot right-of-way in the *Aspen Hill Master Plan*. Bike lanes, BL-17, are recommended along Bonifant Road in the *Countywide Bikeway Functional Master Plan*.
3. Layhill Road (MD 182) is designated as a four-lane divided major highway (M-16) with a 150-foot right-of-way and a proposed Class II bikeway between Norbeck Road (MD 28) and Longmeade Crossing Drive in the *Aspen Hill Master Plan*. Bike lanes, BL-18, are recommended along Layhill Road in the *Countywide Bikeway Functional Master Plan*.

Adequate Public Facilities Review

The applicant proposes to remove and replace 34,450 square feet of the existing 100,363 square feet of general retail land uses including a supermarket (Giant) while adding another 64,323 square feet. The net increase in retail use would be 29,863 square feet or a total of 130,236 square feet. This proposed increase of 29,863 square feet would generate 55 peak-hour total trips during the weekday morning peak period (6:30 to 9:30 a.m.) and 222 peak-hour total trips during the weekday evening peak period (4:00 to 7:00 p.m.). However, not all of the total trips would be new trips where the motorist's primary origin-destination would be from this shopping center. The number of new trips would be 33 peak-hour trips during the weekday morning peak period and 133 peak-hour trips during the weekday evening peak period. The remaining trips are pass-by and diverted trips where origin and destination of motorists are other than the shopping center. They drive by the shopping center and they just stop at this location for their shopping and then continue on their travel route on the adjacent street.

A traffic study was required to satisfy Local Area Transportation Review because the proposed land use would generate 30 or more peak-hour trips during the weekday morning and evening peak periods.

Based on the results of the traffic evaluation at affected intersections, the table below shows the critical lane volumes (CLV) values as the measure of congestion levels for the identified seven intersections and five site driveways in the study area. The traffic conditions analyzed included the existing, background (existing traffic plus traffic from approved, but unbuilt developments), and total future traffic that include site trips.

Intersection Congestion Standard and Levels in CLVs

Intersection / Roundabout	Capacity Criteria: CLV Standard/Delay	Weekday Peak Hour	Traffic Condition			
			Existing	Background	Total Future	Total Future with Improvements
Bel Pre Road and Connecticut Avenue	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,301	1,320	1,323	-----
		Evening	1,051	1,072	1,082	-----
Bel Pre Road and Homecrest Drive	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,342	1,370	1,373	-----
		Evening	959	987	996	-----
Bel Pre Road and Beaverwood Lane	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,040	1,054	1,057	-----
		Evening	865	884	898	-----
Bel Pre Road and Western-most Site Driveway	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,067	1,080	1,086	-----
		Evening	1,011	1,030	1,052	-----
Bel Pre Road and Site Driveway- Parker Farm Way	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,065	1,078	1,084	-----
		Evening	975	997	1,019	-----
Bel Pre Road and Site/ Restaurant Exit Driveway	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,037	1,051	1,056	
		Evening	1,002	1,020	1,043	
Bel Pre Road and Site/Service Station & Restaurant Driveway	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,166	1,180	1,235	-----
		Evening	1,161	1,176	1,350	-----
Bel Pre Road and Site/Service Station Eastern Site Driveway	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,046	1,060	1,078	-----
		Evening	899	918	942	-----
Bel Pre Road-Bonifant Road and Layhill Road (MD 182)	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,504*	1,539*	1,546*	1,417
		Evening	1,297	1,345	1,375	1,258
Bonafant Road and Pebblestone Drive	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	1,344	1,355	1,360	-----
		Evening	1,236	1,253	1,275	-----
Layhill Road and Norbeck road (MD 28)	Aspen Hill CLV Standard=1,500	Morning	858	861	863	-----
		Evening	828	832	836	-----
Layhill Road and Middlevale Lane	Kensington/Wheaton CLV Standard=1,600	Morning	1,027	1,037	1,039	-----
		Evening	820	834	842	-----

*= The CLV at this intersection exceeds its congestion/CLV standard of 1,500.

Only CLV values at the intersection of Layhill Road and Bel Pre Road/Bonifant Road exceed the congestion standard of 1,500 during the weekday morning peak hour in the existing, background, and total traffic condition. As recommended in the second condition, a separate eastbound right-turn lane from Bel Pre Road to southbound Layhill Road would increase the intersection capacity and results in reducing the CLV value in the total future traffic condition below the congestion standard.

The Policy Area Transportation Review component of the APF test is no longer applicable under the *FY 2005 Annual Growth Policy*, even though this non-residential development would add 75 more jobs to the Aspen Hill Policy Area.

Available Bus Service

Ride-On routes 49 and 51 operate along a segment of Bel Pre Road in front of the shopping center. Ride-On routes 26 and 39 operate along nearby Bonifant Road. Bus stops are located at or near the five analyzed intersections with Bel Pre Road and Bonifant Road with bus stop benches near all but one at it's intersection with Beaverwood Lane.

Ride-On bus routes 26, 39, and 49 operate along nearby Layhill Road south of the intersection with Bel Pre Road-Bonifant Road. Ride-On bus routes 26 and 51 operate along Layhill Road north of the intersection with Bel Pre Road-Bonifant Road. Bus stops are located at or near the two of the three analyzed intersections with Bel Pre Road-Bonifant Road and Middlevale Lane.

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalk exists on the north side and a Class I bikeway exists on the south side along Bel Pre Road between Georgia Avenue (MD 97) and Layhill Road. The sidewalk and bikeway end east of the intersection of Layhill Road along Bonifant Road. Sidewalks exist on both sides of the southern leg of Pebblestone Drive and Bonifant Road.

Sidewalks exist along Layhill Road from Long Meade Road, through its intersection with Bel-Pre Road-Bonifant Road, and continues south to Georgia Avenue. There are no sidewalks along Layhill Road north of Longmeade Road to the intersection with Norbeck Road (MD 28). A Class I bikeway exists on the north side of the eastern leg of Norbeck Road.

EA:gw

cc: Lee Cunningham
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mimo to Srinivas re Plaza Del Mercado