



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

MCPB No. 19-096
Sketch Plan No. 320180200
12500 Ardennes Avenue
Date of Hearing: July 18, 2019

OCT 21 2019

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, under Section 59-7.1.2 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, the Montgomery County Planning Board is authorized to review sketch plan applications; and

WHEREAS, on June 9, 2018, Ardennes Partners, LLC ("Applicant") filed an application for approval of a sketch plan for construction of a residential development with up to 198,718 square feet of total development (including 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) and 10% Work Force Housing Units (WFHUs)), on 1.32 acres of CR-2.0, C-1.5, R-2.0, H-145T zoned-land, located at 12500 Ardennes Avenue ("Subject Property") in the 2009 Twinbrook Sector Plan ("Sector Plan") area; and

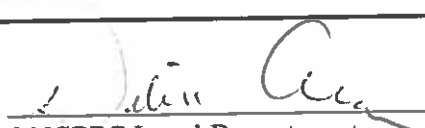
WHEREAS, Applicant's sketch plan application was designated Sketch Plan No. 320180200 12500 Ardennes Avenue ("Sketch Plan" or "Application"); and

WHEREAS, following review and analysis of the Application by Planning Board staff ("Staff") and other governmental agencies, Staff issued a memorandum to the Planning Board, dated July 8, 2019, setting forth its analysis and recommendation for approval of the Application subject to certain binding elements and conditions ("Staff Report"); and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2019, the Planning Board held a public hearing on the Application at which it heard testimony and received evidence submitted for the record on the Application; and

WHEREAS, on July 18, 2019, the Planning Board voted to approve the Application subject to conditions, on the motion of Commissioner Fani-Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Cichy, with a vote of 4-0; Commissioners Anderson, Cichy, Fani-Gonzalez, and Patterson voting in favor with Commissioner Dreyfuss absent.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Board approves Sketch Plan No. 320180200, 12500 Ardennes Avenue, for construction of up to 198,718

Approved as to
Legal Sufficiency: 

MCPB No. 19-096
Sketch Plan No. 320180200
12500 Ardennes Avenue

square feet of total development (including 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) and 10% Work Force Housing Units (WFHUs)) and up to 225 units on the Subject Property, subject to the following binding elements and conditions:¹

A. Binding Elements. The following site development elements are binding under Section 59.7.3.3.F of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance:

1. Maximum density and height;
2. Approximate location of lots and public dedications;
3. General location and extent of public open space;
4. General location of vehicular access points; and
5. Public benefit schedule.

All other elements are illustrative.

B. Conditions. This approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. Density

The Sketch Plan is limited to a maximum of 198,718 square feet of residential development, including 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) and 10% Work Force Housing Units (WFHUs), on the Subject Property. The maximum number and distribution of residential dwelling units will be determined at Preliminary and Site Plan.

2. Height

The development is limited to a maximum height of 100 feet, as measured from the building height measuring point(s) illustrated on the Certified Site Plan.

3. Incentive Density

The development must be constructed with the public benefits listed below, unless modifications are made under Section 59.7.3.3.I. Total points must equal at least 100. The requirements of Division 59.4.7.1 and the CR Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines must be fulfilled for each public benefit. Final points will be established at Site Plan approval.

- a. Transit Proximity, achieved through Property's location within ¼ mile of the Twinbrook Metro Station (level 1).
- b. Connectivity and Mobility, achieved through providing a minimum amount of parking.
- c. Diversity of Uses and Activities, achieved by providing 15% of the residential units as MPDUs.

¹ For the purpose of these binding elements and conditions, the term "Applicant" shall also mean the developer, the owner or any successor(s) in interest to the terms of this approval.

- d. Quality of Building and Site Design, achieved through exceptional design, public art, structured parking.
- e. Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment, achieved through building lot terminations and a cool roof.

4. Future Coordination for Preliminary Plan(s) and Site Plan(s)

In addition to any other requirements for Preliminary Plans under Chapter 50 and Site Plans under Chapter 59, the following must be addressed when filing a Preliminary Plan or Site Plan:

- a. Exact location and details of the relocation of the National Champion Crabapple tree.
- b. Dedication of five (5) feet on Twinbrook Parkway.
- c. Design of proposed public art.
- d. Design of the Public Open Space that should be accessible and inviting to the public.
- e. Building amenities to help activate the public open space.
- f. Appropriate architectural treatments to the southern façade.
- g. Prominent architectural treatment of the northeastern corner.
- h. Safe and efficient vehicular entry to the parking garage.
- i. Motor Vehicle System Adequacy Test with Traffic Impact Study.
- j. Traffic Mitigation Agreement (TMAG) with the Planning Board and MCDOT.
- k. ADA compliance.
- l. Protected intersection at Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway.
- m. Bike lanes on Twinbrook Parkway.
- n. High quality bicycle parking, as required by the Zoning Code and described in the Planning Department's Bicycle Parking Guidelines (pages 13 – 15).
- o. Bike sharing station(s).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that having given full consideration to the recommendations and findings of Staff as presented at the hearing and set forth in the Staff Report, which the Planning Board hereby adopts and incorporates by reference (except as modified herein), and upon consideration of the entire record and all applicable elements of the Zoning Ordinance, the Board finds that as conditioned the necessary elements of the Sketch Plan are appropriate in concept and appropriate for further review at site plan and that:

- 1. *The Sketch Plan meets the objectives, general requirements, and standards of the Zoning Ordinance.*

The CRT Zone permits a mix of residential and nonresidential uses at varying densities and heights. The CRT Zone promotes economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable development patterns where people can live, work, recreate, and access services and amenities. The application of the CRT Zone is appropriate where impacts can be mitigated by co-locating housing, jobs, and services.

a. Development Standards

The Subject Property includes a tract area of approximately 1.32 tract acres, zoned CR-2.0, C-1.5, R 2.0, H-145T. The Sketch Plan meets the development standards of Section 59-4.5.4, as shown below. The Application will provide the minimum required number of bicycle parking spaces for residents and visitors, which will be determined at the time of Site Plan(s). The number of vehicular parking spaces will be determined at Site Plan(s) based on the square footage of non-residential uses, and number and type of residential dwelling units.

Development Standards and Parking Requirements

Section	Description	Required/Permitted	Approved
Density and Height			
4.5.4.B.2.b	Maximum Density	Total 150,544 sf Commercial 112,908 sf Residential 150,544 sf	Residential 198,718 sf
4.5.4.B.2.b	Maximum Building Height (H)	145 feet	100 feet
Open Space and Parking			
4.5.4.B.1	Minimum Open Space	5% of site area (2,856 sf)	Approx. 5.6% of net tract area (3,207 sf)
6.2.4.B	Minimum Parking Permitted/Maximum Parking Allowed	Minimum: 198 spaces Maximum: 248 spaces	200 spaces
6.2.4.C	Bicycle Parking Residential	Min. 0.5 spaces/unit, max. 100 spaces	100 spaces

b. Intent of the Zone

The Sketch Plan conforms to the intent of the CR Zone as described below.

i. *Implement the recommendations of applicable master plans.*

The Subject Property is located within the Metro Core Area 2 of the Sector Plan. The Sector Plan provides the following guidance for properties within Metro Core Area 2:

“Redevelopment density and mixed-uses should continue the Twinbrook Station pattern of buildings oriented to the street and create pedestrian connections. The full 2.0 FAR is appropriate in this area, but any development above 1.5 must be applied to residential uses. The site could also redevelop completely with residential uses at 2.0 FAR and provide MPDUs and workforce housing. (Sector Plan, p.33)”

The Sector Plan also recommended that development within the Metro Core Area 2 should continue the neighborhood pattern of street fronting buildings, provide pedestrian connections to the adjacent Twinbrook Station project and be compatible with the adjacent development within the City of Rockville.

The Application is consistent with the Sector Plan's vision for the Property as it represents redevelopment of this underutilized site with residential uses, including both MPDUs and WFHUs, and orients the proposed building to the adjacent streets. The Project's design will place the street activating private amenity spaces along Ardennes Avenue and at the intersection of Ardennes and Twinbrook Parkway. The Application will also include streetscape improvements along Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue that will enhance the pedestrian experience. The Application's public open space is proposed to be oriented to the corner to maximize visibility and will be designed to be attractive not only to the residents of the project but also to other area residents commuting to and from the nearby Metro station.

The Sector Plan provided additional design guidance regarding appropriate building heights, promoting structured and shared parking, enhancing pedestrian connections and providing a mix of uses. The proposed building is within the prescribed height limits. Its massing is compatible with the massing of adjacent buildings within the Twinbrook Station Development and its layout screens a 2-level parking structure with residential units and amenities lining the streets. The Planning Board finds the Sketch Plan to be in conformance with the Sector Plan.

During the future stages of regulatory review, Staff will work with the Applicant to ensure the following:

- The design of the public open space is usable and welcoming.
- Transformers and utilities are located away from public view.
- Adequate buffer is designed between the development and existing buildings to the west and south.
- The ground floor of the building has residential units and amenities that open on to the street.

- The streetscape creates a comfortable walking environment along Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue.
 - The architecture expresses a dynamic building form that responds to the context and adds to the character of the neighborhood. The following strategies may be explored:
 - o A more dynamic roof line with, accentuating key corners and important vistas.
 - o Locating certain amenities on the roof and making it accessible to residents.
 - o A more refined corner element at the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue.
 - o Further emphasizing the entrance to the building along Ardennes Avenue.
 - o Including balconies facing the street into the design of the elevations.
 - o Providing human scale elements along the ground floor along both streets.
 - o Designing the amenities along Twinbrook Parkway in a way that integrates the amenities and the Public Open Space seamlessly.
 - o Providing amenities on the ground floor that are open to the public.
 - o Making the end facades facing Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue more attractive through massing variation, additional fenestrations, public art etc.
 - o Appropriately screening exposed parking garage facades.
- ii. *Encourage development that integrates target opportunities for redevelopment of single-use commercial areas and surface parking lots with mix of uses.*

The Subject Property is currently comprised of an aging office building with an ancillary surface parking lot. The Application proposes redeveloping the site into a pedestrian-friendly project that will incorporate activating ground-floor private amenity uses and multi-family dwelling units adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro Station in accordance with this objective.

- iii. *Encourage development that integrates a combination of housing types, mobility options, commercial services, and public facilities and amenities, where parking is prohibited between the building and the street.*

The Application will include market-rate, MPDU and WFHU residential units in a variety of unit types (studios, one-bedrooms, and two-bedrooms). As a result, the Application will provide different

housing opportunities for a range of demographics and incomes. The Application will also allow for important streetscape improvements that enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in and around the Property. No parking is proposed between the building and street frontages.

- iv. *Allows a flexible mix of uses, densities, and building heights appropriate to various settings to ensure compatible relationships with adjoining neighborhoods.*

The proposed building height of up to 100 feet will be compatible with the adjacent buildings. Surrounding buildings on Higgins Place are between five (5) and six (6) stories in height and the Twinbrook Place office building to the north is seven (7) stories in height. In addition, the Subject Property is approximately eight (8) feet lower in grade than adjacent properties, further ensuring height compatibility.

- v. *Integrate an appropriate balance of employment and housing opportunities.*

The development of multi-family residential uses on the Subject Property will create a more balanced mix of uses along Twinbrook Parkway. There are a number of commercial office and industrial uses in the vicinity of the Subject Property that generate employment opportunities. Given the proximity of well-established employment uses near the Subject Property, the additional housing provided by the Project will create an opportunity for individuals to live, work, and play in the Twinbrook area. The Application will also offer a variety of housing options through the provision of market-rate units, MPDUs and WFHUs.

- vi. *Standardize optional method development by establishing minimum requirements for the provision of public benefits that will support and accommodate density above the standard method limit.*

The Application will provide the required public benefits from a minimum of four categories to achieve the desired incentive density above the standard method limit. Per Section 4.7.3.D.6.e, one less category is required if greater than 15% MPDUs are being provided.

2. *The Sketch Plan substantially conforms to the recommendations of the 2009 Twinbrook Sector Plan.*

As discussed in finding 1.b.i, the Sketch Plan substantially conforms to the recommendations of the Sector Plan.

3. *The Sketch Plan satisfies, under Section 7.7.1.B.5 of the Zoning Ordinance, the binding elements of any development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014.*

The Sketch Plan is not subject to a development plan or schematic development plan.

4. *Under Section 7.7.1.B.5, for a property where the zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was the result of a Local Map Amendment, satisfy any green area requirement in effect on October 29, 2014; any green area under this provision includes and is not in addition to any open space requirement of the property's zoning on October 30, 2014.*

The Subject Property's zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was not a result of a Local Map Amendment.

5. *The Sketch Plan achieves compatible internal and external relationships between existing and pending nearby development.*

The Sketch Plan successfully achieves compatibility with the varied uses in its immediate vicinity. The surrounding development (with the exception of the Exxon gas station adjacent to the south) is a mixture of mixed use and commercial developments of similar heights. The proposed building will be wrapping the main level of the parking with dwelling units and amenities facing the street. The building will be set back from the neighboring apartment building to the west and will wrap the second internal partial parking level with dwelling units and a green space to shield the parking from view. The main courtyard level will be elevated facing south and the two wings of the residential typical floors will be set back slightly from the south property line with minimal fenestration so as not to impact future development nor conflict with the existing amenity spaces of the neighboring building to the southwest.

6. *The Sketch Plan provides satisfactory general vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist access, circulation, parking, and loading.*

The Sketch Plan provides satisfactory general vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist access, circulation, parking, and loading. All vehicular access to the Project will be from Ardennes Avenue. The structured parking garage is proposed in the center of the block in accordance with the Sector Plan recommendations. The placement of vehicular and loading access along the western portion of the Property's Ardennes Avenue frontage will allow for an uninterrupted pedestrian through zone along the remainder of the Property's Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway frontages. Additionally, the Application is proposing a shared pedestrian and bike path along Twinbrook Parkway. The Sketch Plan proposes up

to 3,207 square feet of public open space that will supplement the proposed streetscape improvements and contribute to an enhanced pedestrian experience with immediate connections to the Twinbrook Metro Station.

7. *The Sketch Plan proposes an outline of public benefits that supports the requested incentive density and is appropriate for the specific community.*

Taking into account the considerations in Section 59-4.7.1.B, including the recommendations and objectives of the Sector Plan and any applicable design guidelines, the Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines, the size and configuration of the site and its relationship to adjacent properties, similar public benefits nearby, and additional enhancements related to the individual public benefits, the Planning Board finds that the following outline of public benefits supports the Applicant's request for incentive density and is appropriate for the community surrounding the site. Final determination of public benefit point values will be determined at Site Plan(s).

For a development of this size in the CR Zone, the Zoning Ordinance requires 100 points in at least four categories. However, per Section 4.7.3.D.6.e, one less category is required if 15% or greater MPDUs are being provided so only three categories are required. Although at the time of Sketch Plan review, only the categories need to be approved, the following table shows both the categories and points for public benefits requested at Sketch Plan to demonstrate the project's ability to meet the requirement to provide sufficient public benefit points. The final calculations and benefit points earned will be further refined and ultimately determined at subsequent Site Plan(s). The Applicant's proposed public benefits are shown below in the following four categories: Transit Proximity, Connectivity and Mobility, Quality Building and Site Design, and Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment. The Planning Board supports the proposed public benefits at this time, with a more detailed review and the final number of points to be determined at site plan.

Proposed Public Benefits

Public Benefit	Incentive Density Points	
	Max Allowed	Total Requested
59.4.7.3.B: Transit Proximity		
Full Site within ¼ mile of Level 1 Transit Station	40	40
59.4.7.3.C: Connectivity and Mobility		
Minimum Parking	10	9
59.4.7.3.D: Diversity of Uses and Activities		
Affordable housing- 15% MPDUs	n/a	30
59.4.7.3.E: Quality of Building and Site Design		

MCPB No. 19-096
 Sketch Plan No. 320180200
 12500 Ardennes Avenue

Exceptional Design	10	10
Public Art	10	10
Structured Parking	20	10
59.4.7.3.F: Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment		
Building Lot Termination (BLTs)*	30	1
Cool Roof	10	10
Total	-	120

Transit Proximity

The entire Property is located one-quarter mile from the Twinbrook Metrorail (level 1) Station and the Applicant requests 40 points as allowed in the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Board supports this request.

Connectivity and Mobility

Minimum parking: The Project will provide fewer parking spaces than the maximum allowed under the Zoning Ordinance. Thus, the Applicant anticipates achieving 9 points in this public benefit category. Maximum allowed spaces are 247 and the minimum allowed is 198 spaces. The Planning Board supports the Applicant’s request based on the following calculation:

Formula: $[(A-P)/(A-R)]*10$
 A (247 maximum allowed spaces)
 R (198 minimum required spaces)
 P (200 proposed spaces)
 $[247 \text{ maximum}-200 \text{ proposed}]/[247 \text{ maximum}-198 \text{ minimum}]*10= 9 \text{ points.}$

Diversity of Uses and Activities

Moderately Priced Dwelling Units: Moderately Priced Dwelling Units: The Applicant seeks approval for 30 points for providing 15% MPDUs. The project will provide 15% MPDUs, 2.5% above the minimum required. Twelve (12) points are allowed for every percentage point over the required 12.5% MPDUs as demonstrated in the calculation below. The Planning Board supports the Applicant’s request based on the following calculation:

$[15\% \text{ (percentage MPDUs provided)}-12.5\% \text{ (percentage MPDUs required)}]*12= 30 \text{ points}$

Quality building and site design

Exceptional Design: The Applicant requests 10 points for building or site design whose visual and functional impacts exceptionally enhance the character of a setting. Per the Incentive Density Guidelines, 10 points are appropriate for development that meets all six design criteria for building or site design. The Applicant explains that the Project will meet all of the design criteria listed below:

- Provide innovative solutions in response to the immediate context.
- Creating a sense of place and serves as a landmark.
- Enhancing the public realm in a distinct and original manner.
- Introducing materials, forms or building methods unique to the immediate vicinity or applied in a unique way.
- Designing compact infill development so living, working and shopping environments are more pleasurable and desirable on a problematic site.
- Integrating low-impact development methods into the overall design of the site and building, beyond green building or site requirements.

Design details will be further explored at the time of Site Plan.

Structured parking: The Project will provide structured parking with all of the 200 parking spaces to be provided in an above-grade garage. The Applicant seeks 10 points for structured parking benefit category per the following formula:

Formula: $[(A/T)*10]+[(B/T)*20]$
A (200 above-grade spaces)
B (0 below-grade spaces)
T (200 total spaces)
 $[(200/200)*10]+[(0/200)*20] = 10$

Public Art: As part of the sketch plan review process, the Applicant is exploring the incorporation of public art into the project, achieving 10 points in this public benefit category. While the art will likely be wall mounted and/ or included within the architecture, further details will be available as part of the next review cycle and refined at the time of Site Plan.

Formula: $[(A/T)*10]+[(B/T)*20]$
A (200 above-grade spaces)
B (0 below-grade spaces)
T (200 total spaces)
 $[(200/200)*10]+[(0/200)*20] = 10$

Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

Building Lot Termination (BLT): The Applicant requests 1 point permitted for the purchase of approximately 0.27 BLTs. The Planning Board supports the Applicant's request for 1 point at this time based on the following calculation:

$(150,544 \text{ (optional method density in square feet)} - 37,636 \text{ (standard method density in square feet)}) \times 7.5\% \text{ (percentage of incentive density floor area)} / 31,500$

MCPB No. 19-096
Sketch Plan No. 320180200
12500 Ardennes Avenue

(square feet of gross floor area required per BLT) x 9 (points per BLT purchased) =
0.27 BLTs & 2.4 points. The Applicant is only requesting 1 point at this time.

8. *The Sketch Plan establishes a feasible and appropriate phasing plan for all structures, uses, rights-of-way, sidewalks, dedications, public benefits, and future preliminary and site plan applications.*

The Applicant intends to follow this Sketch Plan application with a Site Plan application and construct in one phase. Thus, phasing is not necessary for this development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board's approval of a sketch plan is in concept only and subject to further review at site plan, when, based on detailed review the Board may modify the Sketch Plan's binding elements or conditions based on the Montgomery County Code, the Sector Plan, or other requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution incorporates by reference all evidence of record, including maps, drawings, memoranda, correspondence, and other information; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all binding site development elements shown on the latest version of Sketch Plan No. 320180200, 12500 Ardennes Avenue, received by M-NCPPC as of the date of the Staff Report, are required, except as modified by the above conditions of approval; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution constitutes the written opinion of the Board in this matter, and the date of this Resolution is OCT 21 2019 (which is the date that this Resolution is mailed to all parties of record); and

* * * * *

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Cichy, seconded by Commissioner Verma, with Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Fani-González, and Commissioners Cichy and Verma voting in favor, and Commissioner Patterson absent at its regular meeting held on Thursday, September 26, 2019, in Silver Spring, Maryland.



Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board