

7025 STRATHMORE STREET

**PRELIMINARY PLAN NO. 120250120, SITE PLAN NO. 820250080
AND FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN NO. F20250460**



Description

Request to create one lot to construct a new residential multifamily building with a maximum density of 170,000 square feet for up to 172 units with 15% MPDUs, including up to 81,859 square feet of Bethesda Overlay Zone Density.

COMPLETED: 11/3/2025

PLANNING BOARD HEARING DATE: 11/13/2025

MCPB ITEM NO. 7

Planning Staff



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LOCATION/ADDRESS

7025-7039 Strathmore Street

MASTER PLAN

2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*

ZONE

CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 and the Bethesda Overlay Zone

PROPERTY SIZE

1.34 acres

APPLICANT

Strathmore Apartments I LP & Strathmore Apartments II LP

ACCEPTANCE DATE

May 14, 2025

Regulatory Extension approved from September 11 to November 13, 2025

REVIEW BASIS

Chapters 59, 50 & 22A

Summary:

- In January of 2024, the Planning Board approved Sketch Plan No. 320240030 to allow the redevelopment the property for a multifamily residential development of up to 180 units with 15% MPDUs utilizing Bethesda Overlay Zone Density.
- The Preliminary Plan and Site Plan, with accompanying Forest Conservation Plan, proposes one lot for the multifamily development totaling 172 units with 15% MPDUs (26 units), with associated PIP for Bethesda Overlay density, a through block connection, and improvements to frontages on Strathmore Street, Woodmont Avenue, and a public alley.
- In addition to 15% MPDUs, the Applicant proposes to restrict 6 units to 80% Area Median Income (AMI) for a period of 20 years, in coordination with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs. This results in 32 of the 172 units being regulated as affordable at varying AMI.
- Staff has received public correspondence for the Applications, see Section 4 for further details.
- Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary Plan, Site Plan, and Forest Conservation Plan with conditions.

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SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

PRELIMINARY PLAN NO. 120250120

Staff recommends approval with conditions of the Preliminary Plan to create one lot for up to 172 multifamily units. The development must comply with the binding elements and conditions of approval for Sketch Plan No. 320240030 as listed in the MCPB Resolution No. 24-005 dated January 25, 2023. All site development elements shown on the latest electronic version of the Preliminary Plan No. 120250120 as of the date of this Staff Report submitted via ePlans to the M-NCPPC, are required except as modified by the following conditions¹:

GENERAL APPROVAL

1. This Preliminary Plan is limited to one (1) lot for 172 multi-family dwelling units.

ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES

2. The Adequate Public Facilities (“APF”) review for the Preliminary Plan will remain valid for five (5) years from the initiation date (as defined in Montgomery County Code Section 50.4.3.J.5).

PLAN VALIDITY PERIOD

3. The Preliminary Plan will remain valid for three (3) years from its initiation date (as defined in Montgomery County Code Section 50.4.2.G), and before the expiration date of this validity period, a final record plat for all property delineated on the approved Preliminary Plan must be recorded in the Montgomery County Land Records or a request for an extension filed.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

4. The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (“MCDOT”) in its letter dated October 22, 2025, and incorporates them as conditions of the Preliminary Plan approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the letter, which may be amended by MCDOT if the amendment does not conflict with any other conditions of the Preliminary Plan approval.
5. Before recording a plat for the Subject Property, the Applicant must satisfy MCDOT’s requirements for access and improvements.
6. The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Maryland State Highway Administration (“MDOT SHA”) in its letter dated October 21, 2025, and incorporates them as conditions of the Preliminary Plan approval. The Applicant must comply with each of

¹ For the purposes of these conditions, the term “Applicant” shall also mean the developer, the owner or any successor (s) in interest to the terms of this approval.

the recommendations in the letter, which may be amended by MDOT SHA if the amendment does not conflict with any other conditions of the Preliminary Plan approval.

7. Before the issuance of access permits, the Applicant must satisfy the Maryland State Highway Administration's requirements for access and improvements.
8. The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services ("MCDPS"), Water Resources Section, in its stormwater management concept letter dated July 18, 2025, and incorporates them as conditions of the Preliminary Plan approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the letter, which may be amended by MCDPS – Water Resources Section if the amendment does not conflict with any other conditions of the Preliminary Plan approval.
9. The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services ("MCDPS"), Fire Department Access and Water Supply Section, in its letter dated July 23, 2025, and incorporates them as conditions of approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the letter, which MCDPS may amend if the amendment does not conflict with other conditions of Preliminary Plan approval.

OTHER APPROVALS

10. Except clearing and grading associated with the demolition of the existing building and paving, the Applicant must receive Staff certification of the accompanying Site Plan No. 820250080 before submitting a record plat application or any clearing or grading on the Subject Property. The number and location of site elements including but not limited to buildings, on-site parking, site circulation, sidewalks, and shared pathway is determined through Site Plan review and approval.
11. If an approved site plan amendment for the Subject Property substantially modifies the lot or right-of-way configuration or quantities shown on this Preliminary Plan, the Applicant must obtain approval of a Preliminary Plan amendment before certification of the Site Plan amendment.

NOISE

12. If any changes occur to the Site or Preliminary Plans which affect the validity of the noise analysis dated August 18, 2025, acoustical certifications, and/or noise attenuation features, a new noise analysis will be required to reflect the changes, and new noise attenuation features may be required.

TRANSPORTATION

Frontage Improvements on Existing Roads

13. The Applicant must provide the following dedications and show them on the record plat(s) for the following existing roads:
 - a) All land necessary to accommodate 30 feet from the existing pavement centerline along the Subject Property frontage on Strathmore Street.
 - b) All land necessary to accommodate 40 feet from the opposite right-of-way line along the Subject Property frontage on Woodmont Avenue.
14. Before the recordation of plat(s), the Applicant must satisfy all necessary requirements of MCDPS to ensure construction of a 10-foot-wide sidewalk and 6-foot-wide street buffer on Woodmont Avenue.
15. Before the recordation of plat(s), the Applicant must satisfy all necessary requirements of MCDPS to ensure construction of a 6.5-foot-wide street buffer and a 6-foot-wide sidewalk on Strathmore Street.

Off-Site Improvements/LATR

16. Before the recordation of the plat, the following off-site improvements must be permitted and bonded (to ensure construction) pursuant to MCDOT and/or MDOT SHA requirements:
 - a) Install four (4) ADA/PROWAG-compliant curb ramps along Woodmont Avenue
 - b) Upgrade six (6) streetlights along Woodmont Avenue
 - c) Install two (2) new streetlights along the Strathmore Street and Wellington Drive intersection
17. If, at the time the Applicant submits for permits to construct one of the required LATR Off-Site Improvements, the improvement is no longer necessary or desirable, because: i) it has been constructed or is under construction by another applicant or as part of a capital improvement project by a government agency, or, ii) the applicable master plan has changed and no longer requires or suggests the improvement, the Applicant can propose an alternative LATR off-site improvement from the priority list of improvements provided in the subject Staff Report that is of similar value, and this alternative improvement, if reviewed and approved by Planning Staff, can be substituted and shown on a revised Certified Preliminary Plan.
18. Before issuance of the first above-grade building permit or right-of-way permit (whichever comes first), the Applicant must make a payment of \$155,550 to the Montgomery County Department of Transportation towards the construction of bikeway and pedestrian improvements in the Bethesda CBD, or the Bethesda/Chevy Chase Policy Area pursuant to the LATR Guidelines. The Applicant will need to work with MCDOT for future guidance for this payment. The payment will be indexed to the Federal Highway Administration's National Highway Construction Cost Index from the mailing date of the Planning Board resolution to the date of application for the first above-grade building permit or right-of-way permit (whichever comes first). Proof of payment is required.

RECORD PLATS

19. There shall be no clearing or grading of the site before recordation of plat(s).
20. The record plat must show necessary easements.

CERTIFIED PRELIMINARY PLAN

21. The certified Preliminary Plan must contain the following notes:
 - a) *Unless specifically noted on this plan drawing or in the Planning Board conditions of approval, the building footprints, building heights, on-site parking, site circulation, and sidewalks shown on the Preliminary Plan are illustrative. The final locations of buildings, structures and hardscape will be determined at the time of issuance of site plan approval. Please refer to the zoning data table for development standards such as setbacks, building restriction lines, building height, and lot coverage for each lot.*
22. Before submittal of the Certified Preliminary Plan, the Applicant must make the following changes:
 - a) Show resolutions and approval letters on the certified set
 - b) Revise data tables or remove as appropriate to be consistent with Site Plan.
 - c) Resubmit the LATR Study addressing SHA comments from the SHA letter dated October 21, 2025 and MCDOT comments from MCDOT letter dated October 22, 2025.

SITE PLAN NO. 820250080

Staff recommends approval of Site Plan No. 820250080, for the construction of a multifamily building with a maximum density of 170,000 square feet for up to 172 multifamily units with 15% MPDUs. The development must comply with the binding elements and conditions of approval for Sketch Plan No. 320240030 as listed in the MCPB Resolution No. 24-005 dated January 25, 2023 and Preliminary Plan No. 120250120 being considered concurrently with this Site Plan. All site development elements shown on the latest electronic version of the Site Plan, as of the date of this Staff Report submitted via ePlans to the M-NCPPC, are required except as modified by the following conditions.²

DENSITY, HEIGHT & HOUSING

1. Density

The Site Plan is limited to a maximum of 170,000 square feet of total residential development on the Subject Property for up to 172 multi-family dwelling units.

2. Height

The development is limited to a maximum height of 70 feet, as measured from the building height measuring point, as illustrated on the Certified Site Plan.

3. Bethesda Overlay Zone (“BOZ”) Density & Park Impact Payment (“PIP”)

- a) Based on the utilization of 81,859 square feet of BOZ density, reduced by 21,942 square feet of MPDU density³, the Applicant is required to pay into the PIP, for 59,917 square feet of BOZ density, in the amount of \$932,907.69 (59,917 sq ft x \$15.57 BOZ rate as of July 14, 2025).
- b) The Applicant must pay to the M-NCPPC half of the PIP totaling \$466,453.85 before the release of any building permit for the Project.
- c) The Applicant must pay the remaining half of the PIP before the release of the first use and occupancy permit, totaling \$466,453.84.
- d) In the event the final allocation of density from the BOZ is less than the approved amount, or if the amount of exempt MPDU density changes, the Applicant may apply to reduce the allocation of density from the BOZ, and/or modify the PIP through a minor site plan amendment.

4. Green Cover

- a) The Applicant must provide a minimum of 35% of Green Cover on the Site comprised of intensive green roof, native canopy tree plantings, and/or bioretention planter boxes, as shown on the Certified Site Plan.

² For the purposes of these conditions, the term “Applicant” shall also mean the developer, the owner, or any successor(s) in interest to the terms of this approval.

³ Section 59.4.9.2.C.3.c.i. of the Zoning Ordinance exempts MPDU density from the Park Impact Payment.

- b) Any green roof installed pursuant to this condition must have a minimum soil depth of eight inches (8 in) or Staff approved equivalent.

OPEN SPACE, FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

5. Public Open Space

- a) The record plat must reflect a common use and access covenant for the benefit of the public over all trails, sidewalks, and paths not included in a public right-of-way. The covenant must be in a form approved by the M-NCPPC Office of the General Counsel and recorded among the Montgomery County Land Records.
- b) The Applicant must provide a minimum of 2,700 square feet of public open space (10% of net lot area) on-site.
- c) Before release of the surety bond, the Applicant must construct the streetscape improvements, including the undergrounding of utilities, along the Property's frontage on Woodmont Avenue and Strathmore Street, consistent with the Bethesda Streetscape Standards.
- d) Before the issuance of final use and occupancy certificates (excluding core and shell), all public open space areas on the Subject Property must be completed.

6. Public Benefits

The Applicant must provide the following public benefits and meet the applicable criteria and requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the *CR Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines* for each one.

- a) Connectivity between Uses, Activities, and Mobility Options
 - i. Minimum Parking
The Applicant must not provide/construct more than 142 parking spaces.
 - ii. Through-Block Connection
The Applicant must provide the pedestrian connection between the public alley and Strathmore Street. The pedestrian connection must be shown on the CSP.
- b) Diversity of Uses and Activities
 - iii. Affordable Housing/MPDUs
 - a. The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of DHCA in its letter dated July 30, 2025, and incorporates them as conditions of the Site Plan approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the letter, which may be amended by DHCA provided that the amendments do not conflict with other conditions of the Site Plan approval.
 - b. The development must provide 15 percent MPDUs, or MCDHCA -approved equivalent, consistent with the requirements of Chapter 25A and the applicable Master Plan.

- c. The development must provide an additional 6 affordable units at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) for a minimum of 20 years through a rental agreement with DHCA as specified in their agency letter.
 - d. Before issuance of any building permit for any residential unit, the Agreement to Build between the Applicant and the DHCA must be executed.
 - iv. Enhanced Accessibility for the Disabled

The Applicant must construct two (2) dwelling units that satisfy American National Standards Institute A117.1 Residential Type A standards or an equivalent County standard.
 - c) Quality Building and Site Design
 - i. Architectural Elevations

Final elevation design must be shown on the Certified Site Plan. The exterior architectural elements must be substantially similar to architectural elevations as shown on the Certified Site Plan and as determined by M-NCPPC Staff.
 - ii. Exceptional Design

The exterior architectural character, proportion, materials, and articulation must be substantially similar to the schematic elevations shown on Sheet A-09a and A-09b of the submitted architectural drawings, as determined by M-NCPPC Staff.
 - iii. Structured Parking

The Applicant must provide all parking spaces within a below-grade structure.
 - d) Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment
 - i. Building Lot Terminations (BLTs)

Before issuance of any building permit, the Applicant must provide proof of purchase and/or payment to the MCDPS and M-NCPPC staff of 0.3348 BLTs.
 - ii. Cool Roof

The Applicant must provide a minimum solar reflectance index (SRI) of 75 for roofs with a slope at or below a ratio of 2:12, and a minimum SRI of 25 for slopes above 2:12 as shown on the Certified Site Plan.
 - iii. Vegetated Roof

The Applicant must install a vegetated roof with a soil depth of a minimum of eight inches (8 in) covering a minimum of 43% of the building's roof, excluding space for mechanical equipment, as shown on the Certified Site Plan.
7. Recreation Facilities
- The Applicant must provide the required recreation facilities as shown on the Certified Site Plan (CSP).

ENVIRONMENT

8. Stormwater Management

The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Service (MCDPS) Water Resources Section in its stormwater management concept letter dated July 18, 2025, and incorporates them as conditions of approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the letter, which the MCDPS Water Resources Section may amend if the amendments do not conflict with other conditions of Site Plan approval. The MCDPS Water Resources Section will review, approve, and inspect all landscaping within the Storm Water Management easements and facilities.

TRANSPORTATION

9. The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services Right-of-Way Section (DPS-ROW) in its memo dated July 18, 2025, as well as DPS-ROW's associated e-mail correspondence dated October 27, 2025 concerning potential flexibility for the construction sequence for removing certain existing storm drain improvements, and incorporates them as conditions of approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the memo, which DPS-ROW may amend if the amendments do not conflict with other conditions of Site Plan approval.

10. Pedestrian & Bicycle Circulation

The Applicant must provide 86 long-term and five (5) short-term bicycle parking spaces.

- a) The 86 long-term spaces must be in a secured, well-lit bicycle room on the ground floor and bicycle rooms in a parking garage, and the five (5) short-term spaces must be inverted-U racks (or approved equal) installed in a location convenient to the main entrance (weather-protected preferred). The specific location(s) of the short-term bicycle rack(s) must be identified on the Certified Site Plan.
- b) The Applicant must provide one (1) bicycle repair station.
- c) The Applicant must provide the following master planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the exact location, design, and construction of which must comply with requirements of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations, before issuance of any right-of-way permit.
 - i. Four (4) ADA/PROWAG compliant curb ramps and crosswalks on Strathmore Street and Wellington Drive.
 - ii. Woodmont Avenue: ten (10)-foot-wide sidewalk with a six (6)-foot-wide buffer from traffic.
 - iii. Strathmore Street: six (6)-foot-wide sidewalk with six and a half (6.5)-foot-wide buffer from traffic.

AGENCY COORDINATION

11. Fire and Rescue

7025 Strathmore Street

Preliminary Plan No. 120250120, Site Plan No. 820250080, Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250460

The Planning Board has reviewed and accepts the recommendations of the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (MCDPS), Fire Department Access and Water Supply Section, in its letter dated July 23, 2025, and hereby incorporates them as conditions of approval. The Applicant must comply with each of the recommendations in the letter, which MCDPS may amend if the amendments do not conflict with other conditions of Site Plan approval.

SITE PLAN

12. Lighting

- a) Before certified Site Plan, the Applicant must provide certification to Staff from a qualified professional that the exterior lighting in this Site Plan conforms to the latest Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) recommendations (Model Lighting Ordinance-MLO: June 15, 2011, or as superseded) for a development of this type. All onsite exterior area lighting must be in accordance with the latest IESNA outdoor lighting recommendations (Model Lighting Ordinance-MLO: June 15, 2011, or as superseded).
- b) All onsite down-lights must have full cut-off or BUG-equivalent fixtures.
- c) Deflectors will be installed on all proposed fixtures to prevent excess illumination and glare.
- d) Illumination levels generated from on-site lighting must not exceed 0.5 footcandles (fc) at the lot line, excluding areas impacted by street lights within the right-of-way.
- e) Streetlights and other pole-mounted lights must not exceed the height illustrated on the Certified Site Plan.
- f) On the rooftop of the building, the light pole height must not exceed the height illustrated on the Certified Site Plan.

13. Site Plan Surety and Maintenance Agreement

Before issuance of any building permit, sediment control permit, or Use and Occupancy Certificate (excluding core and shell), whichever comes first, the Applicant must enter into a Site Plan Surety and Maintenance Agreement with the Planning Board in a form approved by M-NCPPC Office of General Counsel that outlines the responsibilities of the Applicant. The Agreement must include a performance bond(s) or other form of surety in accordance with Section 59.7.3.4.K.4 of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, with the following provisions:

- a) A cost estimate of the materials and facilities, which, upon Staff approval, will establish the surety amount.
- b) The cost estimate must include applicable Site Plan elements only for facilities located on the Property (not in the public r.o.w.), including, but not limited to plant material, on-site lighting, streetscape, utilities, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, site furniture, and through block connection paths. The surety must be posted before issuance of any building permit of development and will be tied to the development program.

- c) The bond or surety must be tied to the development program, and completion of all improvements covered by the surety for each phase of development will be followed by a site plan completion inspection. The surety may be reduced based upon inspector recommendation and provided that the remaining surety is sufficient to cover completion of the remaining work.

14. Development Program

The Applicant must construct the development in accordance with a development program table that will be reviewed and approved before the approval of the Certified Site Plan.

15. Certified Site Plan

Before approval of the Certified Site Plan the following revisions must be made and/or information provided subject to Staff review and approval:

- a) Include the stormwater management concept approval letter, development program, and Site Plan resolution (and other applicable resolutions) on the approval or cover sheet(s).
- b) Add the following notes:
 - i. “M-NCPPC Staff must inspect all tree-save areas and protection devices before clearing and grading.”
 - ii. “Minor modifications to the limits of disturbance shown on the site plan within the public right-of-way for utility connections may be done during the review of the right-of-way permit drawings by the Department of Permitting Services.”
 - iii. “The Applicant must schedule a preconstruction meeting (pre-con), preferably on-site, with staff from the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) responsible for Certified Site Plan conformance and compliance, upon approval of the Certified Site Plan (CSP). The pre-con must occur before any site development work commencement and before any work that is covered by the site plan surety and maintenance agreement. The Applicant, along with their representatives, must attend the pre-con with DPS CSP Staff. A copy of the approved Certified Site Plan along with any subsequent amendments is required to be on-site at all times during construction.”
- c) Include approved Fire Department Access Plan.
- d) Modify data table to reflect development standards approved by the Planning Board.
- e) Ensure consistency of all details and layout between Site and Landscape plans.
- f) Include a Recreation Plan delineating location and detail of the recreation facilities, where appropriate, in a manner that is clear and corresponds to the posted surety and maintenance agreement.
- g) Demonstrate that each recreational element proposed in the Recreation Plan satisfies the relevant specifications in the M-NCPPC Recreation Guidelines.
- h) Delineate loading zone area to show height, length, and width meeting the requirements of Section 59.6.2.8 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- i) Update plans to address DPS comments specified in Condition 9.

FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN NO. F20250460

Staff recommends approval of Final Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250460, which includes the development of a new multifamily residential building with 172 units, accompanying Preliminary Plan No. 120250120 and Site Plan No. 820250080. The approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. The Applicant must schedule the required site inspections by M-NCPPC Forest Conservation Inspection Staff per Section 22A.00.01.10 of the Forest Conservation Regulations.
2. The Applicant must comply with all tree-protection and tree-save measures shown on the approved Final Forest Conservation Plan. Tree-save measures not specified on the Forest Conservation Plan (FFCP) may be required by the M-NCPPC Forest Conservation Inspection Staff.
3. The Limits of Disturbance (“LOD”) shown on the Final Sediment and Erosion Control Plan must be consistent with the LOD shown on the approved FFCP.
4. Before recordation of the plat and the start of any demolition, clearing, grading, or construction, whichever comes first, for this development as shown on accompanying Preliminary Plan and Site Plan, the Applicant must:
 - a) Must execute a five-year Maintenance and Management Agreement (“MMA”) in a form approved by the M-NCPPC Office of the General Counsel. The MMA is required for all mitigation tree plantings, including variance tree mitigation plantings credited toward meeting the requirements of the FCP, and invasive plant control measures.
 - b) The Applicant must record an M-NCPPC approved Certificate of Compliance in an M-NCPPC approved off-site forest bank within the Little Falls Branch watershed or Priority Area to satisfy the reforestation requirement for a total of 0.21 acres of mitigation credit. If no off-site forest banks exist within the Little Falls Branch watershed or Priority Area, then the off-site requirement may be met by purchasing 0.21 acres of mitigation credits from a mitigation bank within Montgomery County outside of the Little Falls Branch watershed or Priority Area, subject to Staff approval. If forest mitigation bank credits are not available for purchase, a fee-in-lieu payment must be made to M-NCPPC for the appropriate mitigation credits outside of the same watershed or Priority Area.

SECTION 2: SITE DESCRIPTION

VICINITY

The Property is located in downtown Bethesda within the South Bethesda District, a block west of Wisconsin Avenue at the corner of Woodmont Avenue and Strathmore Street. Wisconsin Avenue is comprised of commercial buildings including a single-story FedEx store, a Verizon store and Sleepy's Mattress store. Taller mixed-use buildings along Wisconsin Avenue include the 120-foot-tall Bethesda Solaire project that is located across Woodmont Avenue to the north and the 90-foot tall Adagio Apartments closer to the intersection of Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue. The recently approved, and under construction, 7000 Wisconsin Avenue Project (Camille Apartments) is located on Wisconsin Avenue directly to the southeast of the Project Site across the public alley. Directly north of the Site across Woodmont Avenue is a nine-story residential building. To the west of the Project Site the uses transition to predominantly residential buildings varying in height from two and three-story single family and townhouses to four story garden apartment buildings.

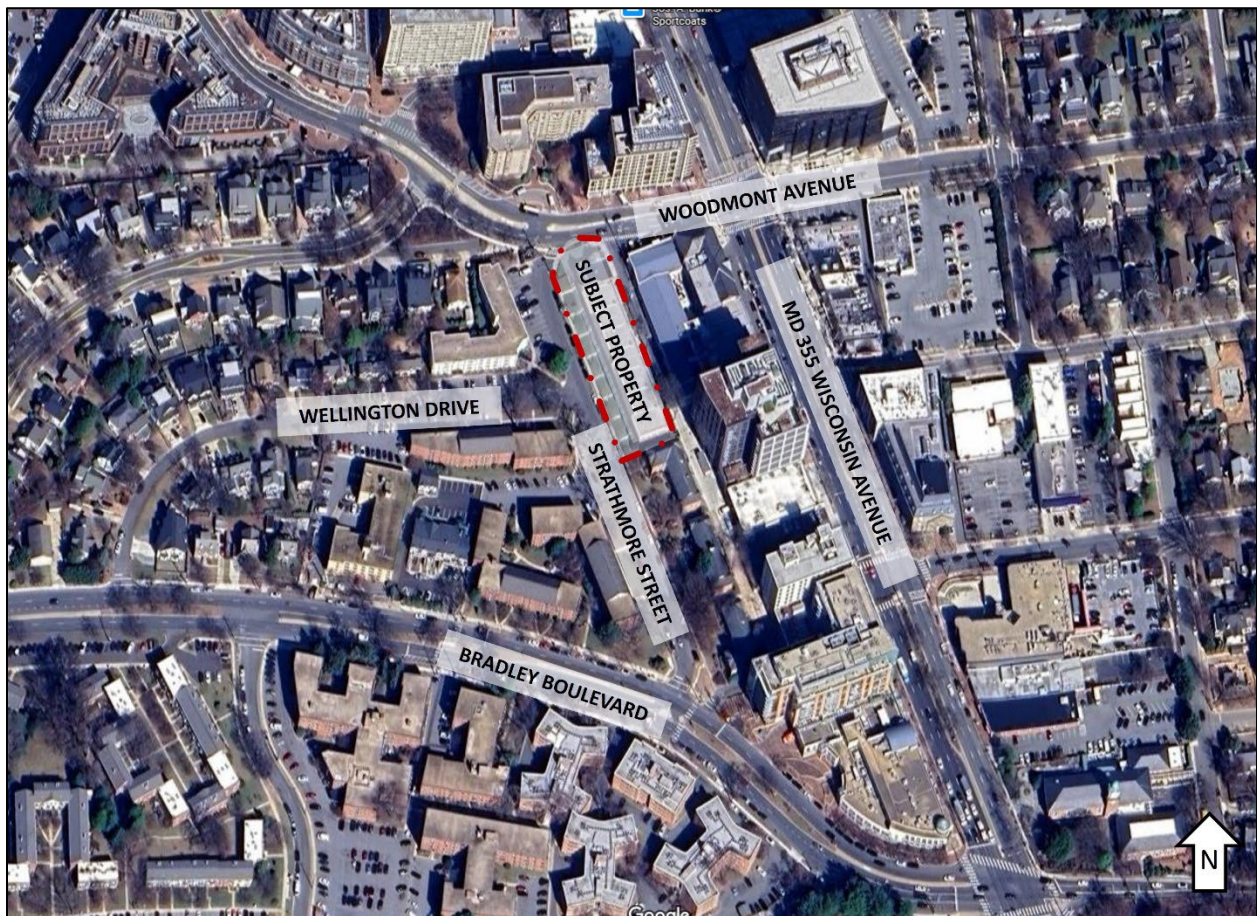


Figure 1 – Vicinity Map

7025 Strathmore Street

Preliminary Plan No. 120250120, Site Plan No. 820250080, Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250460

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS

The Subject Site (“Subject Property”, “Property”, or “Site”) is located at the intersection of Strathmore Street and Woodmont Avenue. The Property is comprised of lots 1, 2, 3, and part of lot 4 originally created by the George Sacks Subdivision recorded in Plat No. 653, containing 1.34 tract acres, with 0.62 acres of Site area after right-of-way dedications.



Figure 2 – View of Subject Property from Strathmore Street

The Site is zoned CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70, within the Bethesda Overlay Zone, and the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. The Property is currently developed with a two-story garden apartment building containing 32 units. The existing building faces Strathmore Street with several lead sidewalks to enter the building, and a sidewalk to the public alley in the rear at the southern Property line. Vehicles access the two-way alley off Woodmont Avenue or Bradley Boulevard to the south, providing rear garage access for several properties facing Wisconsin Avenue. The dimensions of the alley vary along the total length and is encumbered by existing utility poles and garbage cans, however along the site frontage is 20 feet in width.

The Property is in the Little Falls Branch watershed, which is a use class I-P⁴ watershed. The Site is not associated with any areas of forest, 100-year floodplains, or steep slopes. There are lawns and a few landscape elements in the front of the site. Additionally, there is a significant White Mulberry tree and

⁴ Use I-P: WATER CONTACT RECREATION & PROTECTION OF AQUATIC LIFE, AND PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY. Waters that are suitable for: water contact sports: play and leisure time activities where the human body may come in direct contact with the surface water; fishing; the growth and propagation of fish (other than trout); other aquatic life, and wildlife; agricultural water supply; industrial water supply and uses as public water supply.

a specimen Pin Oak tree, measuring 26 and 33 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH), respectively, located in the back alley of the Property. The soils associated with the Property are classified as urban land and are not considered highly erodible or otherwise sensitive. There are no known rare, threatened, or endangered species on the Property.

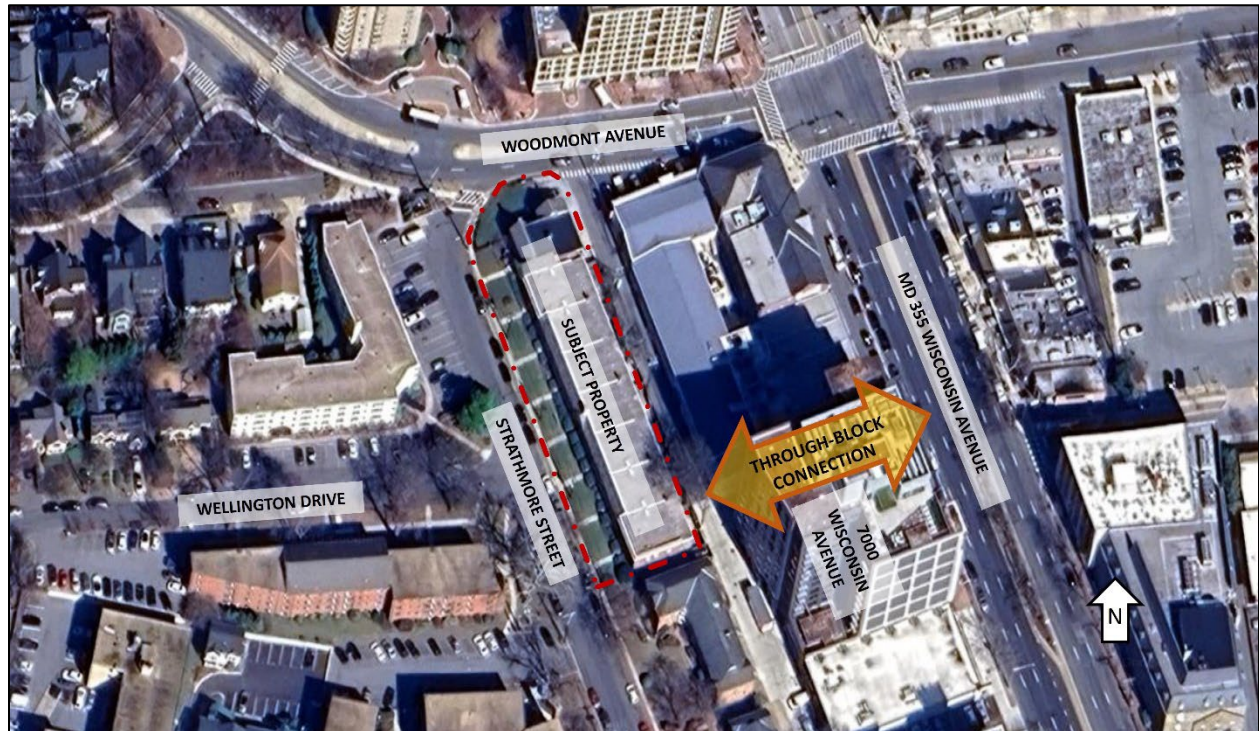


Figure 3 – Aerial View of Subject Property (red dashed line)

SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PREVIOUS APPROVALS

On January 25, 2024, the Planning Board approved Sketch Plan No. 320240030 to allow the redevelopment of the Property for a new residential building up to 70 feet in height with structured parking access from the public alley and utilization of Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) density. The development envisions a total density of 170,000 square feet for up to 180 units with 15% MPDUs. Included in the Sketch Plan is continuation of a through-block connection to achieve a Sector-Planned pedestrian connection from Wisconsin Avenue to Strathmore Street.

7025 Strathmore Street

Preliminary Plan No. 120250120, Site Plan No. 820250080, Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250460

PROPOSAL

The Applicant proposes to construct a new multifamily residential building for up to 172 units with 15% MPDUs (26 units) with utilization of 81,859 square feet of BOZ density with an associated Park Impact Payment. The development will include below grade parking for the building with vehicular and loading access from the public alley. The proposal will also incorporate a through block connection through the southern portion of the Subject Property to complete the Sector Planned through block connection from Wisconsin Avenue to Strathmore Street.

The Applicant proposes to restrict affordability for 6 units (separate of the MPDU requirement) for households earning 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) for a period of 20 years, in coordination with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs. This stems from a goal in the *2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* (the “Sector Plan”) for the South Bethesda District to preserve existing market-rate affordable housing. Given this Property contains 32 existing market-rate affordable units, the Applicant worked with DHCA to maintain 32 units within the redevelopment as a combination of MPDUs and affordable units to achieve the Sector Plan goal.



Figure 4 – Perspective from Woodmont Avenue facing east

BUILDING/ARCHITECTURE

The proposed building form is uniquely massed with a curvilinear façade that juxtaposes with the heavily orthogonal designs in the area. The building will utilize brick and lighter cementitious materials to visually compliment the surrounded with a lighter colored material to highlight the building from both Bethesda Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue. Along Woodmont Avenue, the base will be activated with a two-story transparent lobby and fitness center, with the main building entrance located at the corner of Strathmore Street and Woodmont Avenue. Along Strathmore Street, the building will provide at grade patios with balconies above.

The Project was reviewed by the Bethesda Design Advisory Panel at two meetings in February and May of 2025. At their May meeting, the Panel voted in support of 20 design excellence points with minor modifications to be reviewed as part of the Site Plan application by staff (Attachment D). These items included integration of landscaping within the through block connection and modification of the hardscape around the corner of the building at Strathmore and Woodmont Avenue. These items have been addressed in the submission and as demonstrated in the final design of the through block connection in Figures 7 & 8 below, the landscaping has been integrated with seating elements that line the through block connection, further enhancing the experience.



Figure 5 – Perspective from Strathmore Street looking northeast



Figure 6 – Perspective from Wisconsin Avenue looking southwest

OPEN SPACE

The Project is required to provide 10% of the site area as public open space, which the Applicant proposes to provide predominantly in the Sector Planned through block connection at the southern portion of the Subject Property. This area will partially be covered under the building but will provide a critical passageway for pedestrians accessing amenities along Wisconsin Avenue. The through block connection will connect Strathmore Street to the public alley, where another existing through block connection was recently completed by the 7000 Wisconsin Avenue development, that allows connection from the public alley through the site to Wisconsin Avenue. This area will partially be covered under the building but will provide a critical passageway for pedestrians accessing amenities along Wisconsin Avenue. The space will be amenitized with seating, landscaping, and lighting.

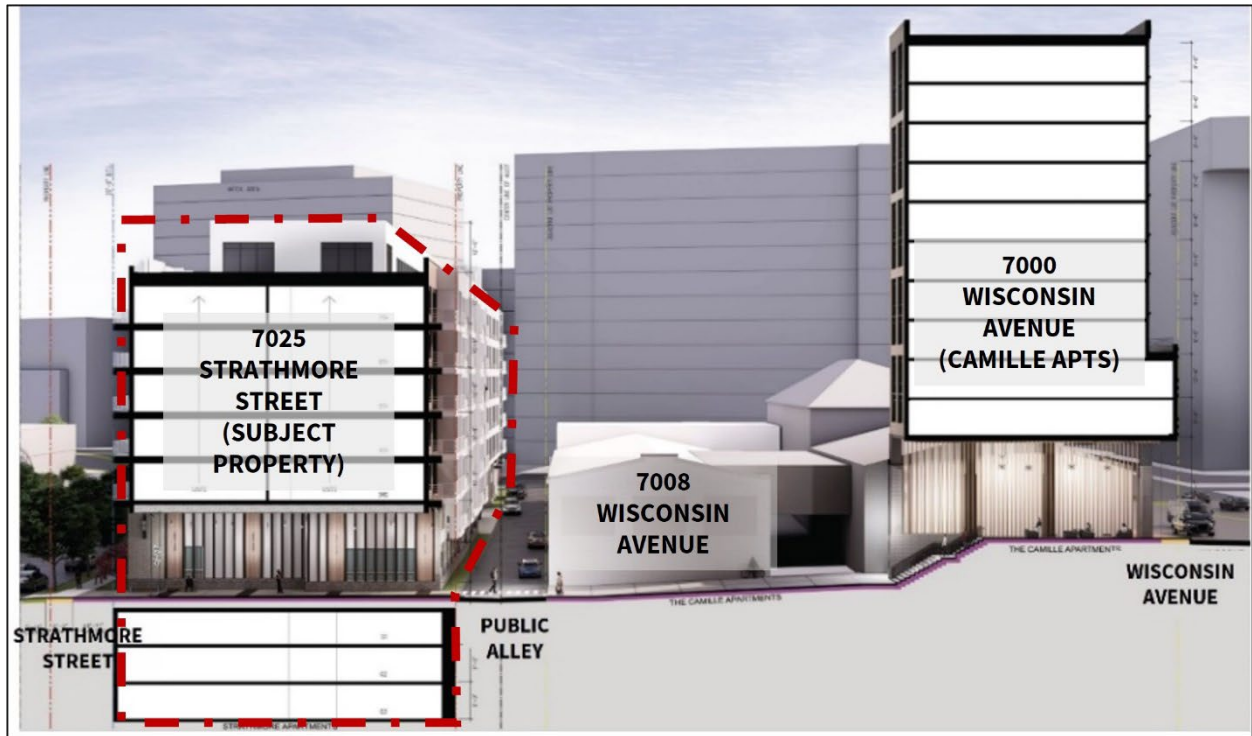


Figure 7 – Section showing connection from Strathmore Street east towards Wisconsin Avenue



Figure 8 – Perspective from Woodmont Avenue facing east

TRANSPORTATION

Pedestrian access and comfort will be improved by frontage improvements and streetscape installation on the Strathmore Street and Woodmont Avenue frontages. Per the Bethesda Streetscape Standards and Design Guidelines, the Applicant is installing a ten (10)-foot-wide sidewalk and six (6)-foot-wide buffer on Woodmont Avenue and a six and a half (6.5)-foot-wide street buffer and a six (6)-foot-wide sidewalk on Strathmore Street. Woodmont Avenue is a Downtown Mixed-Use Street, which requires a minimum of five (5) feet for the Planting/Furnishing Zone and a minimum of eight (8) feet for the Pedestrian Through Zone. Strathmore Street is a Neighborhood Connector, which requires a minimum of six (6) feet for the Planting/Furnishing Zone and a minimum of six (6) feet for the Pedestrian Through Zone. On Strathmore Street, the Project will also install parallel parking for four (4) spaces, including one accessible parking space. The Applicant is accommodating their sidewalk and public access with a combination of Public Access Easement (PAE) and Public Improvement Easement (PIE) along its building line. Additionally, the Applicant is installing ADA/PROWAG-compliant curb ramps along the Wellington Street crossing and along a new mid-block crosswalk in Strathmore Street.



Figure 9 – Proposed Access and Circulation for Site Plan No. 820250080

The Project's vehicular access will be from the public alley on the east side of the Site. This includes both the open-air loading bay and access to the sub-grade parking garage. The existing alley is 20-feet wide, which meets the minimum design requirements for public alleys that serve as primary access for motor vehicles (Section 59-6.1.4.C.1). The Applicant worked with MCDOT and Planning to provide a

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four and a half (4.5)-foot-wide setback for the building along the alley from the Property line to accommodate existing utilities, functionally agreeing to accommodate a 24.5-foot alley.

The alley currently operates bi-directionally, and both termini (Woodmont Avenue and Bradley Boulevard) restrict left turns. The Applicant submitted and satisfied MCDOT's request for an operations analysis for the alley and has successfully addressed their initial concerns about sight distance and turning movements as demonstrated in MCDOT's letter dated September 15, 2025 (Attachment C). This letter recommends a condition that the Applicant include a statement of operations for an approximate east bound nine (9)-foot-wide area of the public alley that is not platted but has been functioning as part of the alley since recordation (this image below is from a Plat recorded in 1939).

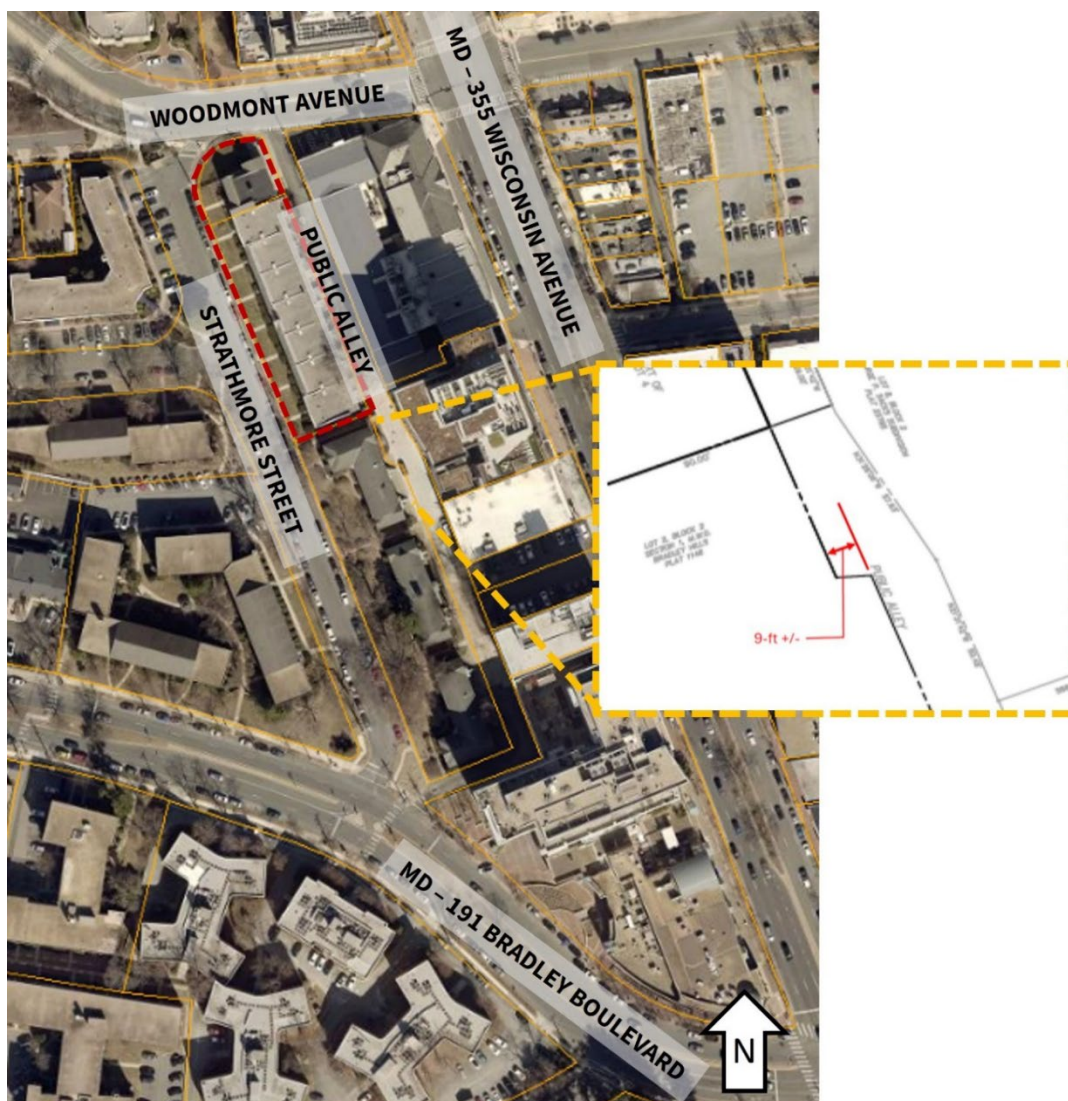


Figure 10 – Public Alley right-of-way

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The Applicant submitted a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) and Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) study to identify offsite mitigations and worked with Planning, MCDOT, and SHA to identify mitigations.

To mitigate the Project's transportation impact, the Applicant will install four (4) PROWAG/ADA-compliant curb ramps along Woodmont Avenue and enhance streetlighting within the study radius by upgrading six (6) streetlights. The Applicant will also contribute \$155,550.00 to meet residual LATR mitigation requirements.

ENVIRONMENT

Although there is no forest onsite or adjacent to the Property, a Forest Conservation Plan (FCP) has been submitted as part of this concurrent Preliminary and Site Plan submission. Due to tract area, associated offsite work, and the mixed-use designation of this project, the FCP proposes a minor afforestation requirement of 0.21 acres, to be addressed by offsite banking or a payment of fee-in-lieu. On-site, there is one tree measuring a 30-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) or greater, and one significant tree with diameter between 24 inches and 30 inches DBH. A variance is requested for the impacts and removal of three specimen trees, as discussed in Section 8 of the Forest Conservation Plan Findings and Analysis.

SECTION 4: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Applicant has complied with all submittal and noticing requirements, and a pre-submittal public meeting was held on January 29, 2025. There were several questions regarding the details of the development with a few concerns relating to traffic, height and density, and construction noise. The Applicant responded that the vehicular loading and access will occur from the public alley, which was studied extensively through the Preliminary Plan review process in coordination with staff from the Planning Department, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and Department of Permitting Services. In regards to density and height, the proposal remains in keeping with the mapped zoning height and vision of the Bethesda Downtown Plan's goal to provide a transition between Bethesda Downtown along Wisconsin Avenue and the single family neighborhoods to the west. Lastly, the Applicant stated that when the project moves forward to building permit, they will be able to provide more details on how the construction impacts will be mitigated.

Staff received one letter of correspondence throughout the review of the Project from a resident that lives nearby with concerns similar to above and that the project is out of character and will change the quality of the neighborhood. As discussed in the Findings Section below, the *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* identified this area as the South Bethesda District which is an established residential neighborhood situated north of Norwood Local Park and comprised of garden apartments,

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townhomes, and single-family neighborhoods. The Sector Plan increased the zoning for many of these properties, to promote infill development and increased lot coverage. While this is one of the first projects to move forward in the District, the Application is in keeping with the vision of the Sector Plan.

SECTION 6: PRELIMINARY PLAN NO. 120250120 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The Preliminary Plan would create one lot, measuring approximately 26,996 square feet or 0.62 acres of Site area, for a maximum density of up to 170,000 square feet of residential uses for up to 172 multifamily dwelling units. This Application has been reviewed for compliance with the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 50, Subdivision Regulations. The Application has been reviewed by other applicable State, County and City agencies.

1. *The layout of the subdivision, including size, width, shape, orientation and density of lots, and location and design of roads is appropriate for the subdivision given its location and the type of development or use contemplated and the applicable requirements of Chapter 59.*

a) *The block design is appropriate for the development or use contemplated*

The proposed Preliminary Plan would consolidate existing lots in an existing block without changing the block design, which is appropriate for the proposed multifamily development.

b) *The lot design is appropriate for the development or use contemplated*

The consolidated lot design is appropriate for the proposed multifamily development, as demonstrated by Table 1 below.

c) *The Preliminary Plan provides for required public sites and adequate open areas*

i. *Master Planned Sites*

The 2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan recommends a through block connection through the southern portion of the Subject Property. The Applicant is proposing an open space connection at the southern portion of the Property. As conditioned, the area will be placed in a public access easement to ensure the public can access through this Property to the east towards Wisconsin Avenue.

ii. *Local Recreation*

There are no recommendations in the Sector Plan for local recreation on the Subject Property.

iii. *Transportation and Utilities*

The 2018 *Bicycle Master Plan* recommends a separated bike lane along Woodmont Avenue; however, it has been determined that it will be implemented as a two-way separated bike lane on the north side of the street, opposite the Site and is currently under construction by MCDOT as a CIP. The Applicant will participate in the implementation of the facility by enhancing several curb ramps adjacent to the facility up to ADA/PROWAG standard.

The *Bethesda Design Guidelines* define Woodmont Avenue as a Downtown Mixed-Use Street, which requires a minimum of five feet (5 ft) for the Planting/Furnishing Zone and a minimum of eight feet (8 ft) for the Pedestrian Through Zone. Strathmore Street is a Neighborhood Connector, which requires a minimum of six feet (6 ft) for the Planting/Furnishing Zone and a minimum of six feet (6 ft) for the Pedestrian Through Zone. The Applicant is installing a 10-foot-wide sidewalk and 6 foot-wide street buffer on Woodmont Avenue and a 6.5-foot-wide street buffer and a 6-foot-wide sidewalk on Strathmore Street. The streetscape will be in accordance with the Bethesda Downtown Streetscape Standards.

d) The Lot(s) and Use comply with the basic requirements of Chapter 59

The proposed lot and use complies with the basic requirements contained in Chapter 59 for optional method of development in the CR zone and the allowances within the Bethesda Overlay Zone.

Table 1: 7025 Strathmore Street Preliminary Plan Data Table for CR Zone, Optional Method, Section 59.4.5.4

Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Proposed
Tract Area	n/a	58,761 sf (1.34 ac)
Tract Area - Prior Dedication	n/a	29,856 sf (0.68 ac)
Tract Area - Proposed Dedication	n/a	1,909 sf (0.04 ac) ¹
Lot Area² (tract area minus dedications)	n/a	26,996 sf (0.62 ac)
Mapped Density		
CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70'		
Residential (GFA/ FAR)	88,141 sf (1.5)	88,141 sf (1.5)
Commercial (GFA/FAR)	14,690 sf (0.25)	0 sf (0)
Total Mapped Density (GFA/FAR)	88,141 sf (1.5)	88,141 sf (1.5)
BOZ Density		81,859 sf (1.39)
Total GFA/FAR		170,000 sf (2.89)
Site Plan Required	Yes	

¹ Proposed dedication totals 1,909 square feet including approximately 442 square feet on Woodmont Avenue and 1,467 square feet on Strathmore Street.

² Per Section 59.4.5.4.B, Lot Area, Density, and Height are finalized at the time of Site Plan for Optional Method of Development Projects in the CR zone. See Site Plan data table below.

2. The Preliminary Plan substantially conforms to the Master Plan.

As discussed in Site Plan Finding 2 below, the Applicant is in conformance with the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and Minor Master Plan Amendment.

3. Public facilities will be adequate to support and service the area of the subdivision.

a) Roads and other Transportation Facilities

iii. Existing Facilities

The site currently fronts substandard sidewalk facilities on Strathmore Street Woodmont Avenue. The site is currently served by a bidirectional 20-foot public alley.

iv. Proposed infrastructure

The Application proposes to dedicate right-of-way along the Woodmont Avenue and Strathmore Street frontages to achieve the master planned right-of-way. Woodmont Avenue has a master planned right-of-way of 80 feet, and the Applicant proposes nine (9) feet of dedication along this frontage to achieve the 40 feet of dedication from the centerline of the street. Strathmore Street has a master planned right-of-way of 60 feet, and the Applicant proposes five (5) feet of dedication along this frontage to achieve 30 feet of dedication from the centerline of the street. Both frontages will be improved in accordance with the *Bethesda Design Guidelines and Streetscape Standards*.

The Applicant, in coordination with MCDOT and Planning, will install ADA/PROWAG-compliant curb ramps at the Wellington Street crossing and a new mid-block crosswalk on Strathmore Street, while also implementing a revised parking layout that includes three parallel spaces and one ADA-accessible on-street parking space.

b) Local Area Transportation Review

As a proposed development with 180 units/170,000 square feet, the Project is estimated to generate 37 total peak hour vehicle trips in the morning and 45 total vehicle hour trips in the evening. After accounting for peak hour vehicle trips currently associated with the existing 32 units/28,905 square feet on the Site, (9 morning peak hour vehicle trips and 10 evening peak hour person trips), the Project is estimated to generate 37 net new morning peak hour vehicle trips and 45 net new evening peak hour vehicle trips. As a result of the

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estimated transportation impact, the Applicant submitted a Transportation Impact Study with the Preliminary Plan to satisfy the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR).

Table 2: Trip Generation Analysis

		ITE Trip Generation Vehicle Rates		Adjusted Vehicle Rates Bethesda CBD Policy Area	
		AM	PM	AM	PM
Existing	32 Multifamily Housing Units (Mid- Rise)	12	13	9	10
Proposed	180 Multifamily Housing Units (High- Rise)	58	70	46	55
Subtotal		46	57	37	45
Net New Vehicle Trips				37	45

Source: Transportation Impact study by Galloway dated April 24, 2025, Revised September 8, 2025

Travel Mode Adequacy Test

The 2024-2028 *Growth and Infrastructure Policy* requires a comprehensive review of the transportation network for projects generating more than 30 net new peak hour vehicle trips, including evaluation of adequacy for motor vehicles and non-motor vehicles (walking, biking, transit). The only exception is that projects within Red Policy Area (such as the Subject Site) are not required to evaluate motor vehicle adequacy. The adequacy tests for transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists are still required, and were performed as part of this Application.

Non-motor Vehicle Analysis

Adequacy Standards

- **Bus Transit Adequacy** is defined as providing ADA-accessible bus shelters and amenities at bus stops located within 500 feet of the Property. Mitigations for identified deficiencies were determined in coordination with MCDOT and Planning Staff.
- **Pedestrian Level of Comfort Adequacy** was evaluated within 250 feet of the Property. Adequacy is defined as providing a Pedestrian Level of Comfort (PLOC) greater than 2 (Somewhat Comfortable).

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- **ADA Compliance Adequacy** was evaluated within 125 feet of the Property. Adequacy is defined as meeting the current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
- **Illuminance Adequacy** is defined as meeting the MCDOT streetlight and illuminance standards. The Applicant must perform photometric evaluations within 250 feet of the Property and identify deficiencies. Mitigations for identified deficiencies were determined in coordination with MCDOT and Planning Staff.
- **Bicycle System Adequacy** was evaluated by analyzing bikeways within 400 feet of the Property. Adequacy is defined as providing a Level of Traffic Stress 2 (LTS-2) or lower.

Under Chapter 4 of the 2025 *Local Area Transportation Review Guidelines* (LATR Proportionality Guide), the maximum cost of mitigation improvements the Applicant is required to construct or fund for a project consisting of 180 residential units/square feet is not to exceed \$359,550 (see calculation below).

$$\text{LATR Proportionality Guide Amount} = (\text{Net New Daily Motor Vehicle Trips}) \times (\text{LATR Proportionality Guide Rate})$$

$$\$359,550 = (470) \times (\$765)$$

For the Subject Preliminary Plan, the cost of construction and/or mitigation payments for the mitigation project is not to exceed \$359,550. After evaluating the adequacy of each of the required transportation modes, the Applicant identified a comprehensive list of deficiencies, by which a prioritized list of mitigation improvements was submitted to staff for review. In compliance with the 2025 *LATR Guidelines*, the final list of twelve prioritized projects was finalized by the reviewing agencies and are now conditioned for approval of the Preliminary Plan. The table identifies those projects which could be feasibly constructed, as well as those projects that could not be feasibly constructed (due to unattainable right-of-way or would require changes to traffic operations outside the control of the Applicant) and are addressed by way of mitigation payments. The final list of thirteen (13) projects is included in Table 3 and a map of the projects is provided on Figure 11 below.

Table 3: 7025 Strathmore LATR Mitigation Project List

Map ID	Project Location	Project Description	Construct/ Mitigation Payment	Project Cost
1	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Install ADA/PROWAG compliant curb ramp	Construct	\$10,000.00
2	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Install ADA/PROWAG compliant curb ramp	Construct	\$10,000.00

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3	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Install ADA/PROWAG compliant curb ramp	Construct	\$10,000.00
4	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Install ADA/PROWAG compliant curb ramp	Construct	\$10,000.00
5	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$15,000.00
6	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$15,000.00
7	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$5,000.00
8	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$5,000.00
9	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$15,000.00
10	North side of Woodmont Avenue	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$15,000.00
11	North side of Wellington Drive	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$30,000.00
12	South side of Wellington Drive	Street lighting Installation	Construct	\$30,000.00
13	Bike and Pedestrian CIP Project	Remaining Proportionality Guide Cost Difference	Mitigation Payment	\$155,550
Total Cost Estimate				\$170,000.00
Permitting Cost				\$30,000.00
Bonding Cost				\$3,400.00
Difference: Cost and Proportionality Guide				\$155,550
Total Cost +Permitting +Bonding				\$204,000.00
Proportionality Guide				\$359,550.00

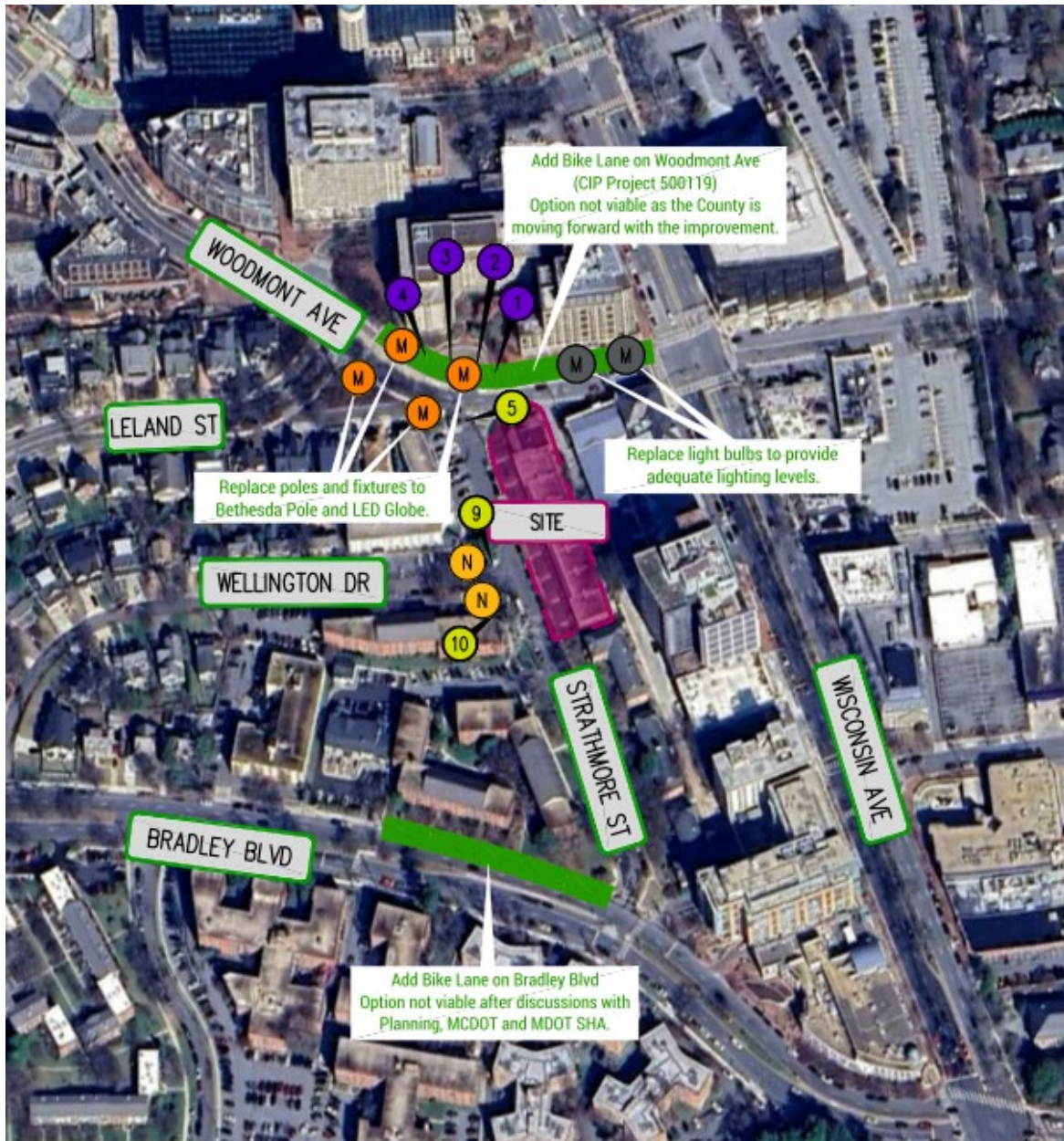


Figure 11 – Map of Off-site LATR Mitigation Projects

As conditioned, all off-site mitigation projects must be permitted, bonded for construction before the recordation of the plat, and all mitigation payments must be paid before the issuance of the first above grade building permit or right-of-way permit (whichever comes first). Planning Staff, MCDOT, and MDOT-SHA staff reviewed the TIS and approved the mitigation project list. Therefore, the Applicant has satisfied the requirements of the LATR, and the public transportation facilities are adequate for the Site.

c) Schools

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The Subject Property is located within the Bethesda CBD Policy Area, which is categorized as an Infill Impact Area by the 2024-2028 Growth and Infrastructure Policy.

The Application is subject to the FY2026 Annual School Test, approved by the Planning Board on June 26, 2025 and effective since July 1, 2025.

The Project is served by Somerset Elementary School, Westland Middle School, and Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. The enrollment and capacity projections of these schools reflected in the FY2026 Annual School Test, which evaluates for the 2029-2030 school year, and the default Utilization Premium Payment (UPP) tier placements are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: FY2026 Annual School Test Projections (2029-2030 School Year) & UPP Tier Placements

	Program Capacity	Enrollment	Utilization Rate	Seat Surplus or Deficit	UPP Tier Placement
Somerset ES	550	336	61.1%	+214	No UPP
Westland MS	1,064	855	80.4%	+209	No UPP
Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS ⁵	2,475	2,345	94.7%	+130	No UPP

Based on the FY2026 Annual School Test results above, the Property is not subject to any UPP by default. However, if the project's enrollment impact estimate exceeds an adequacy ceiling of a school, a partial payment will be required. Table 5 below shows the adequacy ceiling of each school to subsequent UPP tiers.

Table 5: FY2026 Annual School Test Adequacy Ceilings

	Tier 1 Adequacy Ceiling	Tier 2 Adequacy Ceiling	Tier 3 Adequacy Ceiling
Somerset ES	288	324	407
Westland MS	329	422	582
Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS	290	625	997

Enrollment Impact Estimate

Table 6 shows the project's enrollment impact estimate calculation based on the School Impact Area classification and net residential units proposed, using the FY 2026-2027 Student Generation Rates.

Table 6: Student Enrollment Impact Estimate (reflects FY2026-2027 Student Generation Rates)

⁵ Projected enrollment is modified to estimate the impact of the Charles W. Woodward High School Reopening (CIP P651908) and the Northwood HS Addition/Facility Upgrades (CIP P651907), reflecting the scope of the boundary study approved by the Board of Education on March 28, 2023.

Type of Unit	Net Number of Units	Infill ES Student Generation Rate	ES Student Estimate	Infill MS Student Generation Rate	MS Student Estimate	Infill HS Student Generation Rate	HS Student Estimate
MF Low-rise	-32	0.066	-2.112	0.034	-1.088	0.049	-1.568
MF High-rise	172	0.039	6.708	0.016	2.752	0.020	3.440
TOTAL (rounded down)			4		1		1

The average enrollment impact during an average year throughout the life of the project is estimated to be 4 elementary school students, 1 middle school student, and 1 high school student. This does not exceed the adequacy ceilings identified in Table 5. Therefore, a Utilization Premium Payment is not triggered.

d) Other Public Facilities and Services

The Property is served by public water and sewer and is classified in the W-1 and S-1 categories. Public water and sewer mains currently serve the Property, which will be adequate to serve the proposed subdivision.

Dry utilities including electricity, gas, and telephone are also available to the Property. Other utilities, public facilities and services, such as electric, telecommunications, police stations, firehouses and health services are currently operating within the standards set by the Growth and Infrastructure Policy currently in effect.

4. All Forest Conservation Law, Chapter 22A requirements are satisfied.

The Application satisfies all of the applicable requirements of the Forest Conservation Law, Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A and is in compliance with the Montgomery County Planning Department's Environmental Guidelines as further discussed in the findings for Forest Conservation Plan F20250460.

5. All stormwater management, water quality plan, and floodplain requirements of Chapter 19 are satisfied.

DPS approved a Combined Stormwater Management Concept/ Site Development Stormwater Management Plan on July 18, 2025. The plan proposes to meet required stormwater management goals via green roof and micro-bioretenion and a partial waiver has been granted by DPS for areas unable to be treated in the existing public right-of-way due to space limitations.

- 6. Any burial site of which the applicant has actual notice or constructive notice or that is included in the Montgomery County Cemetery Inventory and located within the subdivision boundary is approved under Subsection 50-4.3.M.**

The Applicant does not have actual or constructive notice of a burial site on the Property, nor is the property included in the Cemetery Inventory.

- 7. Any other applicable provisions specific to the property and necessary for approval of the subdivision is satisfied.**

No other provisions apply to the Subdivision.

SECTION 7: SITE PLAN NO. 820250080 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Section 59.4.5.4.A.1 requires that Optional Method projects in the CR zone receive an approved Site Plan under Section 59.7.3.4 for any development on a property with an approved Sketch Plan.

- 1. When reviewing an application, the approval findings apply only to the site covered by the application.**

The findings herein apply only to the Subject Property.

- 2. To approve a Site Plan, the Planning Board must find that the proposed development:**

- a) satisfies any previous approval that applies to the site;**

The Site Plan is in keeping with Sketch Plan No. 320240030, MCPB Resolution No. 24-005 and Preliminary Plan No. 120250120 being considered concurrently.

- b) satisfies under Section 7.7.1.B.5 the binding elements of any development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014;**

This section is not applicable as there are no binding elements of an associated development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014.

- c) satisfies under Section 7.7.1.B.5 any green area requirement in effect on October 29, 2014 for a property where the zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was the result of a Local Map Amendment;**

This section is not applicable as the Subject Property's zoning classification on October

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29, 2014 was not the result of a Local Map Amendment.

d) satisfies applicable use standards, development standards, and general requirements under this Chapter;

i. Division 4.5.4 CR Zone

*Table 7: 7025 Strathmore Street Site Plan Data Table for CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70'
Zone, Optional Method, Section 59.4.5.4*

Development Standard	Permitted/ Required	Proposed
Tract Area	n/a	58,761 s.f. (1.34 ac)
Tract Area - Prior Dedication	n/a	29,856 s.f. (0.68 ac)
Tract Area - Proposed Dedication	n/a	1,909 s.f. (0.04 ac)
Site Area¹ (tract area minus dedications)	n/a	26,996 s.f. (0.62 ac)
Mapped Density CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70'		
Residential (GFA/ FAR)	88,141 s.f. (1.5)	88,141 s.f. (1.5)
Commercial (GFA/FAR)	14,690 s.f. (0.25)	0 sf (0)
Total Mapped Density (GFA/FAR)	88,141 s.f. (1.5)	88,141 s.f. (1.5)
BOZ Density²		81,859 s.f. (1.39)
Total GFA/FAR		170,000 s.f. (2.89)
MPDU requirement	15%	15% of units
Building Height, max	70 ft	70 ft
Principal Building setbacks		
Front (Woodmont Avenue)	0 ft	1 ft
Front (Strathmore Street)	0 ft	6 ft
Side	0 ft	8 ft
Rear (Alley)	4 ft	4 ft
Public Open Space (min s.f. of site area)	10% (2,700 s.f.)	10% (2,700 s.f.)
Sector Plan Green Cover (min s.f. of site area)	35% (9,449 s.f.)	11,233 s.f.
Vehicular Parking (min/max)⁴		
172 residential units	0 ³ /189 sp	142 sp
Bicycle Parking (short-term/long-term)		
172 residential units	4/82 sp	5/86
Loading		
More than 50 dwelling units	1 sp	1 sp

¹ Site area is determined by tract area minus any previous and proposed dedications per Section 59.4.1.7.A

² Projects utilizing Bethesda Overlay Zone Density are subject to a PIP payment and may reduce the square footage associated with MPDUs from the payment calculation.

³ Per Section 59.6.2.3.1.8 of the Zoning Ordinance, residential uses located within ½ mile of a metro station are exempt from parking minimums and the Property is approximately 1900 feet (1/3 mile) from the Bethesda Metro Station.

⁴ Parking will be finalized at the time of building permit based on final unit count.

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The Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) was adopted July 18, 2017, specifically to implement the recommendations of the *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* as it relates to density, building heights, affordable housing, parks, and design. The *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment* was adopted in Spring of 2025 with the key component of the amendment to remove the development cap on density that was originally placed within the plan area. The current BOZ allows an applicant to request an allocation of density over the base density to build to the maximum height permitted by the Zone, as needed. The Applicant is subject to a park impact payment valued at \$15.57/square foot based upon the density requested and this payment facilitates acquisition of parkland in the downtown Bethesda area.

Based on the requested 81,859 square feet of BOZ density, reduced by 21,942 square feet of MPDU density⁶, the Applicant is required to pay for 59,917 square feet of BOZ density at a value of \$932,907.69. The Project has been conditioned for the payment to be made in accordance with Section 59.4.9.2. In the event the final allocation of density from the BOZ is less than the approved amount, or if the amount of exempt MPDU density changes, the Applicant may apply to reduce the allocation of density from the BOZ, and/or modify the PIP through a minor site plan amendment.

The amount of density allocated from the BOZ for the Subject Application will be tracked as part of the Annual Monitoring Report for Bethesda.

ii. ***Division 4.7 Optional Method Public Benefits***

In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, Section 59.4.7.1, the Site Plan proposes 111.64 public benefit points in 4 categories to satisfy the requirements:

Table 8: Public Benefit Calculations- Division 59-4.7

Public Benefit	Maximum Points Allowed	Proposed in concept
Connectivity and Mobility		
Minimum Parking	20	2.49
Through-Block Connections	30	15
Diversity of Uses and Activities		
Enhanced Accessibility	20	3.49
Affordable Rental Units Agreement	n/a	20.9
Quality Building and Site Design		
Architectural Elevations	30	15
Exceptional Design	30	20

⁶ Section 59.4.9.2.C.3.c.i. of the Zoning Ordinance exempts MPDU density from the Park Impact Payment.

Structured Parking	20	20
Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment		
Building Lot Terminations (BLT)	30	3.01
Cool Roof	15	2.24
Vegetative Roof	10	9.50
Total Points	Min Required 100	111.64

Per Section 59.4.9.2.C.4.g of the Zoning Ordinance, the Bethesda Overlay Zone eliminates the category for Transit Proximity, increases the maximum amount of public benefit points available in certain categories, and requires a minimum amount of public benefit points for Exceptional Design and Energy Conservation and Generation. Applicable to this Site Plan are the Overlay Zone's increase in maximum points available for Minimum Parking (from 10 to 20 maximum points), Architectural Elevations (from 20 to 30 maximum points), Exceptional Design (from 10 to 30 maximum points), and Cool Roof (from 10 to 15 maximum points).

CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY

Minimum Parking

The Applicant requests 2.49 points for providing fewer than the maximum allowed number of parking spaces. Points for this incentive are granted on a sliding scale from no points for providing maximum allowable number of on-site spaces to 20 points for providing no more than the minimum number of spaces on-site. Based on the formula set forth in the Bethesda Implementation Guidelines, Staff recommends 2.49 points in this category.

$$\frac{(((\text{Maximum Allowed Parking}) - (\text{Parking Provided})) / ((\text{Maximum Allowed Parking}) - (\text{Minimum Parking}))) * 10}{(189 - 142) / (189 - 0) * 10} = 2.49 \text{ points}$$

Through Block Connection

The Applicant requests 15 points for providing a through-block connection. Points for this incentive are based on design criteria such as open-air access, width, connections to transit, parks, or public buildings, retail access, and wall glazing adjacent to the connection. The Applicant proposes a minimum 15-foot wide pedestrian connection at the southern property line, with a portion of the connection under the building. As requested by the Bethesda Design Advisory Panel, the Applicant provided additional detail to ensure the area is well designed with hardscape, landscape, and lighting and provides an appropriate height and width in relation to the 7000 Wisconsin Avenue

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portion of the through-block connection. Staff recommends 15 points for the through block connection.

DIVERSITY OF USES AND ACTIVITIES

Enhanced Accessibility

The Applicant requests 3.49 points for exceeding the requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Applicant proposes to construct 2 units that satisfy the American National Standards Institute A117.1 Residential Type A standards, or a County equivalent. Staff recommends 3.49 points for this category based on the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{ANSI 117.1 Units} / \text{Total Units}) * 300 \\ & (2 / 172) * 300 = 3.49 \text{ points} \end{aligned}$$

Affordable Rental Units Agreement

Within the Bethesda Overlay Zone, Applicants may receive public benefit points for entering into an agreement with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs for providing affordable housing rents for dwelling units located anywhere in the Overlay Zone. The Applicant is proposing to enter into an agreement with DHCA to provide 6 of the 172 units as affordable housing units on the Subject Property. For these purposes, affordable housing is defined as rents that are affordable to a household with an income of 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) or below, for 20 years. This is distinctively different than requirements for moderately priced dwelling units, for which the Application is providing 15% of units. DHCA has provided a letter in support of these affordable units, as demonstrated in Attachment C and as such, Staff supports 20.9 public benefit points based on the formula below.

6 public benefit points for every 1% of units in the project entered into rental agreement

$$\begin{aligned} & [(\text{units under rental agreement} / \text{total units}) * 100] * 6 \\ & [(6 / 172) * 100] * 6 = 20.9 \text{ points} \end{aligned}$$

QUALITY BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN

Architectural Elevations

The Applicant requests 15 points for providing architectural elevations as part of the Certified Site Plan showing particular elements of the design such as minimum amounts of transparency, maximum separation between doors, and other design priorities of the applicable Sector Plan and implementing design guidelines. The

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Applicant states that the proposed building has been designed to provide architecture and site design elements that will respond to the recommendations of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, as well as with applicable recommendations in the Design Guidelines concerning building height, placement, massing, compatibility and other characteristics. Staff supports the request for 15 points.

Exceptional Design

The Applicant requests 20 points for building and/or site design that enhances the character of a setting. As a site receiving an allocation of Bethesda Overlay Zone density, the Project is subject to review by the Bethesda Design Advisory Panel, which awards exceptional design public benefit points. The design was reviewed by the Bethesda DAP at two meetings in February and May of 2025. At their February meeting, the Panel voted in support of 20 design excellence points with minor modifications to be reviewed as part of the Site Plan application by staff. These items included integration of landscaping within the through block connection and modification of the hardscape around the corner of the building at Strathmore and Woodmont Avenue. These items have been addressed in the submission and as shown in the final design of the through block connection, the landscaping has integrated seating elements that line the through block connection, enhancing the experience. Staff supports 20 points for this category.

Structured Parking

The Applicant requests 20 points for providing all parking within a below grade parking structure based on the following formula:

$$[(\text{Above Grade Parking} / \text{Total Parking}) * 10] + [(\text{Below Grade Parking} / \text{Total Parking}) * 20] \\ [(0/142) * 10] + [(142/142)] * 20 = 20 \text{ points}$$

Staff supports the requested 20 points.

PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Building Lot Termination (BLT) Purchase

The Applicant requests 3.01 points for the purchase of 0.3348 BLT easements or equivalent payment made for every 31,500 square feet of gross floor area comprising the 7.5% incentive density floor area, exclusive of any density allocated for MPDUs. Points are granted by the calculation of BLTs as provided in Section 59.4.7.3.F of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff supports 3.01 public benefit points based on the following calculation:

$$(((\text{Incentive Density} - \text{Standard Method Density}) * 7.5\%) / 31,500) * 9$$

$$(((170,000 \text{ sf}) - (29,381 \text{ sf})) * 7.5\%) / 31,500 * 9 = 3.01 \text{ points}$$

Cool Roof

The Applicant requests 2.24 points for providing two roof areas not encumbered by mechanical equipment or green roof with a minimum solar reflectance index (SRI) of 75 for roofs with a slope at or below a ratio of 2:12 and a minimum SRI of 25 for slopes above 2:12. A maximum of 15 points can be achieved for cool roof, based on the proposed cool roof treatment on 4,900 square feet of the 20,323 roof area (not encumbered by mechanical areas), Staff recommends 2.24 points.

Vegetated Roof

The Applicant is requesting 9.50 points for the installation and maintenance of a vegetated roof covering an area greater than 33% and at a depth of 8 inches. The Applicant provided an exhibit showing an intensive green roof on 6,783 square feet of roof area, not including areas of green roof that are intended for stormwater management requirements. Based on a total roof area of 15,423 square feet (not already encumbered by cool roof and mechanical areas), the Applicant will provide a vegetated roof on 43% of the roof area. Staff recommends 9.5 points for this category.

iii. ***Division 59-6 General Development Standards***

(1) Division 6.1 Site Access

The project's vehicular access will be from the public alley on the east side of the Site. This includes both the open-air loading bay and access to the sub-grade parking garage.

(2) Division 6.2 Parking, Queuing and Loading

The Project is located within the Bethesda Parking Lot District and is within ½ mile of the Bethesda Metro Station, therefore there is no minimum parking requirement for the proposed residential use (Per Section XXX). Regardless, the Project will provide 142 on-site parking spaces, along with two car share spaces, one electric vehicle space, and two motorcycle spaces, within its sub-grade parking garage, accessible via the Site's public alley. Four ADA accessible spaces are also provided in the garage. This meets the requirements of Section 6.2.3 of the Zoning Ordinance and the parking spaces will be finalized at the time of building permit based on final unit count. Three on-street parking spaces and

one ADA parking space will be available on Strathmore Street. One off-street loading space that accommodates a 10 - feet wide, 30- feet long, and 14 feet high SU-30 vehicle will be provided with access from the bidirectional alley. The space is designed to not obstruct bi-directional traffic along the alley during loading activities, and meets the required loading design per Chapter 59 Section 6.2.8.

The Project provides 82 long-term parking spaces located in two bike rooms, one located adjacent to the garage and one located adjacent to the main lobby of the building. A repair station will be provided within one of the bike rooms, as conditioned. Four (4) short-term bike parking spaces are provided on the Strathmore frontage within 90 feet of the building entrance. This bike parking meets the requirements of Chapter 59 Section 6.2.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.

(3) Division 6.3 Open Space and Recreation

The Project will provide 10% of the Site Area as open space meeting the requirements of Section 59-6.3, which will be located at the southern portion of the Subject Property as a Sector Planned through block connection. The open space will be publicly accessible and allow pedestrian access to Wisconsin Avenue from Strathmore Street through the site to the east, public alley, and through the confronting private property that also has a through block connection fronting on Wisconsin Avenue.

The Project will meet the recreational requirements of Section 59.6.3. by providing picnic seating and art seating within the through block connection and rooftop amenity, indoor dog cleaning station, community space and fitness room, and resident lounge. As conditioned, the Applicant will be required to provide a Recreational Plan identifying the final location and elements on the Certified Site Plan.

(4) Division 6.4 General Landscaping and Outdoor lighting

As conditioned, the Project will provide lighting that meets the requirements of Section 59.6.4. The Project will be landscaped with a variety of plantings within the at grade bioretention structures as well as ornamental trees and shrubs between the bioretention structures. The through block connection will also be lined with landscaping along the southern edge of the Property with an incorporated seating area. The landscaping will include a variety of shrubs and perennials.

e) Satisfies the applicable requirements of:

i. Chapter 19, Erosion, Sediment Control, and Stormwater Management; and

DPS approved a Combined Stormwater Management Concept/ Site Development Stormwater Management Plan on July 18, 2025. The plan proposes to meet required stormwater management goals via green roof and micro-bioretenment and a partial waiver has been granted by DPS for areas unable to be treated in the existing public right-of-way due to space limitations.

ii. Chapter 22A, Forest Conservation

The Application satisfies all of the applicable requirements of the Forest Conservation Law, Montgomery County Code, Chapter 22A and is in compliance with the Montgomery County Planning Department's Environmental Guidelines as further discussed in the findings for Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250460.

f) Provides safe, well-integrated parking, circulation patterns, building massing and, where required, open spaces and site amenities;

The Project will provide safe circulation patterns, building massing, open spaces and site amenities. As previously described in Finding 2 above, the Project's vehicular access and loading will be located off the public alley as recommended in the Zoning Ordinance, which will provide structured parking for the residents. The Project is required to provide public open space, which has been incorporated into the design as a through block connection, allowing pedestrian access through the Site, which will be well amenitized with seating, lighting, and landscaping. The building massing and final architecture incorporates the recommendations of the Bethesda Design Guidelines and has been reviewed by the Bethesda Design Advisory Panel throughout the regulatory process.

g) Substantially conforms with the recommendations of the applicable master plan and any guidelines approved by the Planning Board that implement the applicable plan;

The Project substantially conforms to the recommendations for the Property included in the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. Specifically, this Sector Plan builds on the past successes of Downtown Bethesda to create a truly sustainable downtown by focusing on components that will bolster the elements most in need of enhancement. The recommendations include:

1. Parks and open spaces, including new civic greens at Veteran's Park, Bethesda Farm Women's Cooperative Market, Capital Crescent Trail and new urban parks, pathways and gateways.
2. Affordable housing, including the preservation of existing market-rate affordable housing, providing a mix of housing options and the provision of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units in exchange for development incentives.
3. Environmental innovation, including more energy-efficient buildings, better stormwater management, improved sidewalks and bicycle routes, and other measures to enhance community health and quality of life.
4. Economic competitiveness, based on new development, public amenities and proximity to public transit to attract businesses and visitors from throughout the region, and foster entrepreneurship and innovation.

The Property is designated as Site 177 in the South Bethesda District and the Sector Plan rezoned this Site from R-10 to CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70' zone to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage. The South Bethesda District is an established residential neighborhood situated north of Norwood Local Park. This District has a garden character with tree-lined streetscapes and planted setbacks, and offers several opportunities to create improved connections for pedestrians and bicycles within the District. The residential community is predominantly composed of garden apartments and townhouses, with the exception of a neighborhood of single-family homes in the northwest section.

Specifically, the Project addresses the following goals as outlined in the Sector Plan and South Bethesda District sections of the Sector Plan:

- *Improve connectivity throughout the district and between Downtown Bethesda and Norwood Local Park.*

The proposed through-block connection will complete the Sector Planned connection from Wisconsin Avenue to Strathmore Street, which will further the vision of improving pedestrian connectivity between downtown Bethesda and Norwood Local Park (located to the south of Strathmore Street).

- *Encourage some redevelopment of aging housing into mixed-income housing opportunities.*

The existing garden style apartments on the Subject Property were constructed in 1942 with no regulated affordable housing and lacking amenities typical of newer developments. The proposed redevelopment will provide a modern building with amenities and 15% MPDUs.

- *Incentivize expanded affordability for housing.*

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The Applicant proposes to provide the required 15% MPDUs, which is anticipated to be up to 26 units (15% of 172 units), as well as an additional 6 units that will be restricted to 80 % AMI for 20 years. This will maintain 32 of the proposed 172 units at varying levels of affordability, given the existing site contains 32 units with no county regulated affordable housing.

- *Promote incentives to reduce parking.*

The Bethesda Overlay Zone allows a reduction of parking from the Zoning Ordinance minimum standards. The Applicant proposes to provide 142 spaces for the 172 unit building given its proximity to numerous public transportation options including the Bethesda Metro Station.

- *Balance development with transitions to single-unit residential neighborhoods surrounding the Sector Plan area in residential and edge districts, such as . . . South Bethesda*

The massing has been designed to be respectful of the lower residential buildings to the west of the Site. The Strathmore Street frontage will include ground floor units that provide a townhouse feel with patios, and the massing will be further broken down through bays and balconies.

Transportation Recommendations

Woodmont Avenue is a Downtown Mixed-Use Street, which requires a minimum of five (5) feet for the Planting/Furnishing Zone and a minimum of eight (8) feet for the Pedestrian Through Zone. The Applicant will construct a 6-foot-wide street buffer and 10-foot-wide sidewalk, exceeding the minimums. Strathmore Street is a Neighborhood Connector, which requires a minimum of six (6) feet for the Planting/Furnishing Zone and a minimum of six (6) feet for the Pedestrian Through Zone. The applicant will construct a 6.5-foot-wide street buffer and 6-foot-wide sidewalk, meeting the minimum dimensions.

The 2018 *Bicycle Master Plan* recommends a separated bike lane along Woodmont Avenue; however, it has been determined by MCDOT that it will be implemented as a two-way separated bike lane on the north side of the street, opposite the Site, therefore the Applicant will not be required to participate in its implementation.

Environmental Recommendations

Strathmore Street is identified in the Sector Plan as a Canopy Corridor. Canopy Corridor designations are intended to create green corridors that connect parks, trails, stream buffers, and denser forest networks beyond the Bethesda boundaries. The corridors also align with recommended bike and pedestrian priority streets where tree canopy becomes a crucial element to enhance shade and comfort while also providing an ecological benefit. Along Strathmore Street the Project provides a minimum 6.5-foot street

tree buffer/furnishing area which will grow in certain areas to 14 feet, with a 6-foot-wide sidewalk.

The Sector Plan includes a number of recommendations to achieve the urban green goals. An important recommendation of the Sector Plan is the on-site 35% green coverage minimum which the Applicant is achieving with the Project as proposed. The green cover may include singularly or a combination of intensive green roofs (6 inches or deeper) or tree canopy cover. The Project will achieve the green cover with a combination of intensive green roof with a depth of 8 inches and at grade plantings over structure, including the underground garage.

- h) will be served by adequate public services and facilities including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, storm drainage, and other public facilities. If an approved adequate public facilities test is currently valid and the impact of the development is equal to or less than what was approved, a new adequate public facilities test is not required. If an adequate public facilities test is required the Planning Board must find that the proposed development will be served by adequate public services and facilities, including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, and storm drainage;***

As demonstrated in the associated Preliminary Plan No. 120240070 Finding 3, there are adequate facilities to serve the Project.

- i) on a property in a Rural Residential or Residential zone, is compatible with the character of the residential neighborhood; and***

Not applicable, the Project is not within a rural residential or residential zone.

- j) on a property in all other zones, is compatible with existing, approved or pending adjacent development.***

As designed, the Project is compatible with the existing, approved, and pending adjacent development. The 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* recommended building heights within this block to be a maximum of 70 feet to provide a transition from the taller buildings along Wisconsin Avenue down to the lower heights that exist in the single-family neighborhoods in the South Bethesda District further to the west. This Project will have a maximum building height of 70 feet and has been designed architecturally to complement the residential character of the immediately surrounding multifamily buildings. Lastly, the Project has designed the through block connection to directly connect to the confronting

property, 7000 Wisconsin Avenue, which was recently redeveloped to allow pedestrian access to Wisconsin Avenue.

3. ***To approve a Site Plan for a Restaurant with a Drive-Thru, the Planning Board must also find that a need exists for the proposed use due to an insufficient number of similar uses presently serving existing population concentrations in the County, and the uses at the location proposed will not result in a multiplicity or saturation of similar uses in the same general neighborhood.***

Not applicable, this Site Plan does not include a restaurant with a drive-thru.

4. ***For a property zoned C-1 or C-2 on October 29, 2014 that has not been rezoned by Sectional Map Amendment or Local Map Amendment after October 30, 2014, if the proposed development includes less gross floor area for Retail/Service Establishment uses than the existing development, the Planning Board must consider if the decrease in gross floor area will have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.***

Not applicable, the Subject Property was not zoned C-1 or C-2 on October 29, 2014.

SECTION 8: FOREST CONSERVATION PLAN NO. F20250460 FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

All Forest Conservation Law, Chapter 22A requirements are satisfied.

The Property is subject to the Montgomery County Forest Conservation Law, Chapter 22A of the County Code, and requires a Forest Conservation Plan. The Forest Conservation Plan complies with the Montgomery County Environmental Guidelines and the Forest Conservation Law, as conditioned and described below.

The Net Tract Area for forest conservation purposes is 1.34 acres. The Subject Property is zoned CR-1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 and is classified as Mixed-Use Development Areas ("MPD") as defined in Section 22A-3 of the FCL and specified in the Trees Technical Manual. As defined in Section 22A-12(g)(2) of the Forest Conservation Law, off-site reforestation and afforestation requirements are not mandatory if they are less than 0.5 acre and the Planning Board or Planning Director determines that: (A) no on-site priority planting area is present; and (B) no other appropriate on-site planting area is available. The Forest Conservation Worksheet shows a calculated afforestation requirement of 0.17 acres. This requirement is triggered by the tract area, associated offsite work, and the mixed-use designation of the Project. As defined in Section 22A-12(g)(2) of the Forest Conservation Law, an Applicant may meet the required off-site reforestation and afforestation requirements by fee-in-lieu if they are less than

0.5 acre and the Planning Board or Planning Director determines that: (A) no on-site priority planting area is present; and (B) no other appropriate on-site planting area is available. Since the afforestation requirement is less than 0.5 acres and on-site planting is not feasible, as conditioned, this minor afforestation requirement will be met by offsite banking or a payment of fee-in-lieu.

FOREST CONSERVATION VARIANCE

Section 22A-12(b)(3) of the Forest Conservation Law identifies certain individual trees as high priority for retention and protection (“Protected Trees”). Any impact to these Protected Trees, including removal or any disturbance within a Protected Tree’s critical root zone (CRZ), requires a variance under Section 22A-21 (“Variance”). Otherwise, such resources as defined under Section 22A-12(b)(3) must be left in an undisturbed condition.

This Application will require the removal of one and impact to two Protected Trees as identified in Table 9. Section 22A-21 of the County Forest Conservation Law sets forth the findings that must be made for a variance to be granted, and they are discussed below.

Table 9: Variance Tree Removals and Impacted

TREE ID#	DBH	Latin Names	Common Name	Disposition
8	33	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin oak	Remove
8A	38	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black walnut	Save
7	39	<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	London plane tree	Save

Unwarranted Hardship

In accordance with Section 22A-21(a), the Applicant has requested a variance to allow for the removal of one tree and impacts to two existing specimen trees. These necessary impacts are directly tied to the implementation of the Sector Plan, which is aimed at providing affordable housing in this area.

The proposed creation of new stormwater management facilities (which are currently absent from the Subject Property) and accessible green space will require extensive grading and disturbance, necessarily affecting the Critical Root Zones (CRZ) of the protected trees. Furthermore, carrying out the development program requires the demolition of existing concrete surfaces, which consequently necessitates the planned impacts and removal of protected trees.

As conditioned, the proposed layout, which has been coordinated between the Applicant and M-NCPPC Staff, will minimize CRZ impacts to existing specimen trees where possible. Further, the Applicant will coordinate with the M-NCPPC Forest Conservation Inspector to utilize specialized construction techniques, provide tree protection, and minimize the limits of disturbance as feasible in the field.

Denying the variance would create unnecessary hardship, preventing the Applicant from constructing a new multifamily residential building with 172 units which is a reasonable and significant use of the Property.

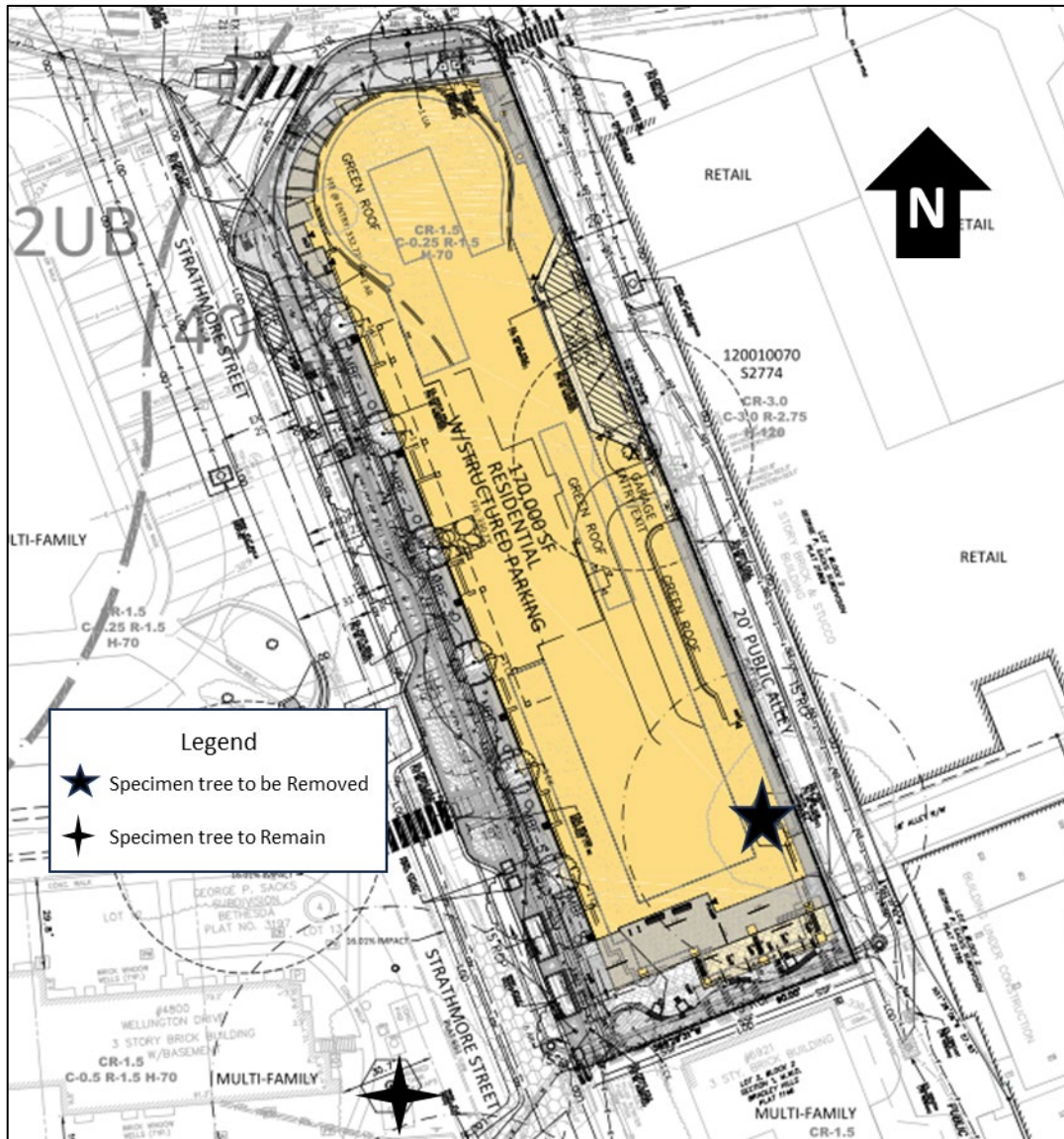


Figure 12 – Variance for tree removals

Variance Findings

The following determinations are based on the required findings for granting of the requested variance:

- 5. Will not confer on the Applicant a special privilege that would be denied to other applicants.**

The proposed construction is for the purpose of redeveloping currently developed property and improving its condition with the appropriate density and uses recommended by the Sector Plan. The specimen tree proposed for removal is located along the existing curb just within the Property along the public alley. The alley will need to be reconstructed within the right-of-way of the Property to improve safety and efficiency and run utility lines. The improvements proposed along the frontage of Strathmore Street will have a minor CRZ impact on two off-site specimen trees, recommended to be saved.

The requested tree variance is necessary for implementation of this multifamily redevelopment project and is proceeding through the development approval process with the submission of the Preliminary Plan and Site Plan. The proposed development also was subject to Sketch Plan review for which it received Planning Board approval for substantially similar layout, densities, and uses on the subject property. As noted in the Sector Plan (page 139) a goal of this area of Bethesda is to “Promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.”

6. Is not based on conditions or circumstances which are the result of the actions by the Applicant.

Denial of the variance would deprive Applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by others in similar areas. The Project minimizes development impact by providing a single building footprint over underground parking. The Property use is consistent with the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood with a compatible use, as evidenced by the numerous project approvals within the vicinity. Further, development is focused on the areas of the property currently improved, which contain the tree subject to removal.

Approval of the variance will allow Applicant to create a development that is consistent with the existing land uses in the area and the recommendations of the Sector Plan. These recommendations include creation of green corridors and increasing soil volume for trees. Currently, there is only one small tree in a roughly two-foot green panel along Strathmore Street.

In contrast, this variance will allow redevelopment including the reconstruction of the Strathmore Street streetscape with numerous trees in wide tree panels along the curb and secondary trees between the sidewalk and building. Approval will also allow for the creation of new and wider sidewalks/pathways connecting the project to the adjacent communities for community enjoyment of surrounding services, recreation opportunities, and outdoor spaces.

Denial of the variances would deprive the landowner of rights commonly enjoyed by others in similar areas who may redevelop in accordance with the recommendations and regulations of Montgomery County.

7. Is not based on a condition relating to land or building use, either permitted or non-conforming

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The requested variance is a result of the proposed site design and layout on the Subject Property and not as a result of land or building use on a neighboring property.

8. *Will not violate State water quality standards or cause measurable degradation in water quality.*

The granting of Applicant's variance request will not result in a violation of State water quality standards, nor will a measurable degradation in water quality occur as a result. On the contrary, the Project will implement measures to improve water quality where no stormwater facilities currently exist. The Project integrates current state-of-the-art stormwater management practices, which will improve upon the Property's current condition by increasing green area – at grade and on the rooftop – meeting State water quality standards via Environmental Site Design facilities.

Mitigation for Resources Subject to the Variance Provisions

There is one (1) subject tree proposed for removal in association with this Application. Onsite planting mitigation for the removal should be at a rate that approximates the form and function of the trees removed, at a ratio of approximately 1" DBH for every 4" DBH removed, using trees that are a minimum of 3" caliper. The result of the proposed removal of one subject trees, for a total of 33" DBH removed, is a mitigation requirement of at least 9 caliper inches of native canopy trees sized at least 3 caliper inches each. Although on-site mitigation planting is prioritized whenever possible, the Site's urban character does not make this possible. Staff recommends approval of offsite mitigation for the Application's specimen tree impacts. Using an offsite mitigation formula which considers the 9 caliper inches of mitigation requirement and an offsite mitigation rate of 100 two-inch trees per acre, the Applicant becomes responsible for an additional 0.04 acres of offsite afforestation, in addition to the 0.17 acre planting requirement calculated by the worksheet, for a total of 0.21 acres of afforestation required for the Application.

Recommendation on the Variance

As a result of the above findings, Staff recommends that the Board approve, with conditions, the Applicant's request for a variance from the Forest Conservation Law to remove one and impact two Protected Trees.

SECTION 9: CONCLUSION

As conditioned, the Preliminary Plan, Site Plan, and Forest Conservation Plan applications each satisfy the applicable standards of the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Forest Conservation Law, and substantially conform to the recommendations of the 2017 *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of Preliminary Plan No. 120250120, Site Plan No. 820250080,

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and Forest Conservation Plan No. F20250460 with the conditions specified at the beginning of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Preliminary Plan, Site Plan, FCP Plan

Attachment B: Prior Approvals

Attachment C: Agency Letters

Attachment D: Bethesda DAP Meeting Minutes

Attachment E: Community Correspondence

Attachment F: Affidavit Regarding Community Meeting and Meeting Minutes

Attachment G: Variance Request Letter