Montgomery Planning

WESTWOOD SHOPPING CENTER

SITE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 82018019C

Description

The Applicant proposes to adjust and reduce the amount of open space required from 38,000 square feet (11.5%) to 32,794 (10%), add a pergola in front of the Jewel Building, modify Condition 4.a, and remove condition 25.j to allow for the continued use of artificial turf in the Civic Green.

COMPLETED: 10/23/2026
PLANNING BOARD HEARING DATE: 11/5/2026
MCPB ITEM NO. 6

Montgomery County Planning Board
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LOCATION/ADDRESS

5400 Westbard Avenue

MASTER PLAN

2016 *Westbard Sector Plan*

ZONE

CRT-2.0, C-0.75, R-1.25, H-60

PROPERTY SIZE

12.4 acres

APPLICANT

Equity One (Northeast Portfolio), LLC

ACCEPTANCE DATE

July 9, 2026

REVIEW BASIS

Chapter 59

Summary:

- This is a Major Site Plan amendment and is specific to the reduction and rearrangement of required open space, addition of a pergola, and removal of condition 25.j to allow for the continued use of artificial turf in the Civic Green. Per Section 59-7.3.4.J.1.c., this amendment must follow the same hearing procedures and satisfy the same necessary findings at the original Site Plan.

- In 2019, the Planning Board approved Site Plan No. 820180190 to allow a maximum density of 540,524 square feet of total development, including 369,292 square feet of residential uses and 171,232 square feet of non-residential uses.

- In 2025, the Planning Board approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019A to allow the reduction of commercial density by 18,792 square feet, relocation of parking, and changes to the loading and garage access, building elevations, and the transformers' location by modifying Conditions 1, 22, and 25 and adding Condition 26.

- In 2025, the Planning Director approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019B to designate outdoor seating areas adjacent to the previously approved commercial building with ground floor retail and restaurant uses.

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SECTION 1: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

SITE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 82018019C

Staff recommends approval of Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019C, to allow the adjustment and reduction of the public open space from (38,000 SF) 11.5% to (32,794 SF) 10%, allow artificial turf within the Civic Green, and add a pergola in front of the Jewel Building. The development must comply with the conditions of approval for Preliminary Plan No. 120170170 as listed in the MCPB Resolution No. 19-032 dated May 6, 2019, as amended.

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.[1] The following Condition Nos. 4.a and 25.j modify the previously approved conditions, and all other conditions remain in full force and effect:

Modified Conditions

4. Open Space, Facilities, and Amenities

a. As illustrated on the Certified Site Plan, the Applicant must provide on-site a minimum of ~~38,000~~ 32,794 square feet of public open space (~~11.5%~~ 10% of site area) and a minimum of 16,815 square feet of common open space (10% of net lot area).

25. Certified Site Plan

a. Provide an interim access plan during construction to ensure continuous and uninterrupted access to the adjacent Kenwood Place Condominium property.
b. Include the stormwater management concept approval letter and other applicable agency letters, development program, Preliminary Plan, and Site Plan resolutions on the approval or cover sheet(s).
c. Add a note to the Site Plan stating that "M-NCPPC Staff must inspect all tree-save areas and protection devices before clearing and grading."
d. Add a note stating that "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."
e. Modify data table to reflect development standards approved by the Planning Board.
f. Clarify the graphics of all applicable sheets to clearly distinguish the existing trees to remain, existing trees to be removed and, new plantings.

[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.

g. Ensure consistency of all details and layout between Site, Landscape plans, Architectural sheets, and the FFCP.
h. Illustrate on the Landscape Plan the extent of all the plantings in and along the grass swale.
i. Provide additional permeable pavement and buffer swale improvements on-site.
~~j. Remove the artificial turf within the Civic Green and replace with grass.~~
~~k~~j. Revise Final Forest Conservation Plan Redline and applicable sheets to reflect layout changes.
~~l~~k. Revise Landscaping Plans to clarify plantings around updated stormwater management areas.

SECTION 2: SITE DESCRIPTION

VICINITY

The neighborhoods surrounding the Subject Property to the north and west include the single-family community of Springfield and the multi-family garden apartments of Kenwood Place. The Residences at Capital Crescent Trail and Westwood Tower Apartments, high-rise apartment buildings, are located to the south and east of the Property. Westland Middle School is located directly southwest of the Property, along with other institutional uses further south, including the Little Flower Catholic Church and the Little Falls Library. Light industrial uses are located predominantly to the south and east of the Subject Property, and directly to the east are office and retail uses, including the American Plant Food Company, the Roof Center, and a McDonald's restaurant.

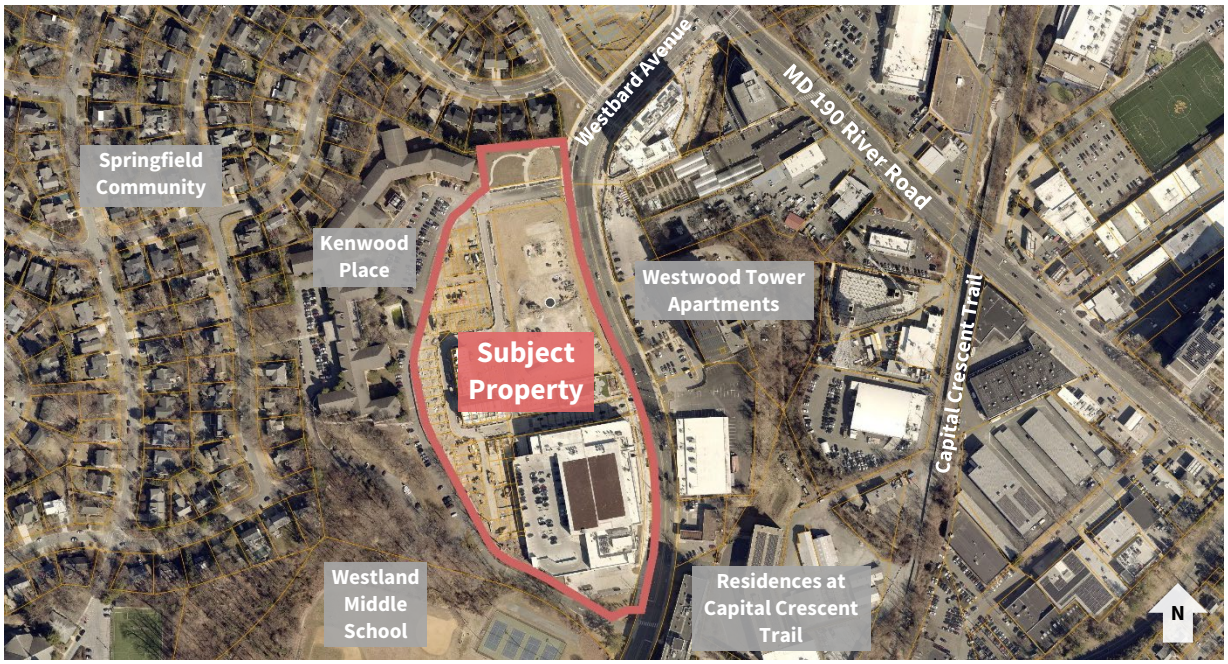

Figure 1 - Vicinity Map

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The Subject Property has a tract area of approximately 540,524 square feet or 12.4 acres and is currently under construction based on the approvals granted by the Planning Board in 2019 and further described below. Before the redevelopment approvals, the Property was developed with the Westwood Shopping Center, with several commercial businesses and surface parking. As shown in Figure 2, the private street network, commercial building (Giant Grocery Store with ground floor retail), the townhouses, Springfield Park, and the Civic Green have been constructed.

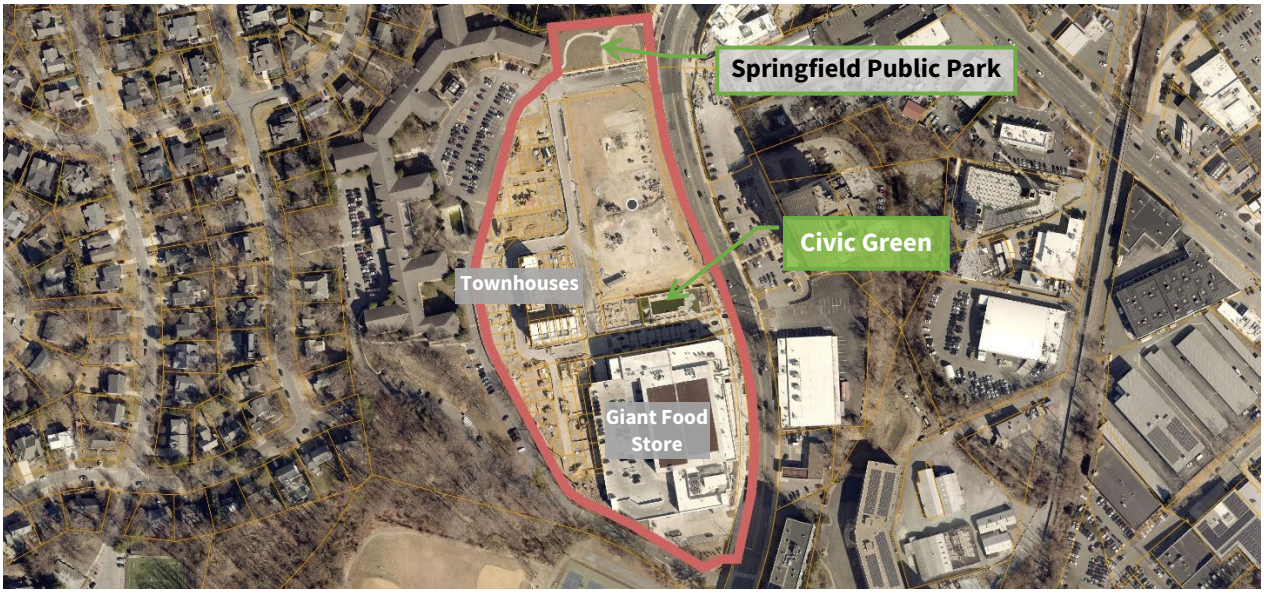

Figure 2 - Subject Property

SECTION 3: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PREVIOUS APPROVALS

In 2019, the Planning Board approved Preliminary Plan No. 120170170, Site Plan No. 820180190, and an associated Forest Conservation Plan. The Preliminary Plan covers a larger area that extends to River Road and is subject to other Site Plans for development. This Site Plan is specific to the 12.4-acre property outlined in red in Figure 2. The Site Plan allows for a maximum density of 540,524 square feet of total development (standard method of development). It includes 369,292 square feet of residential uses for up to 200 multifamily units and 70 townhouse units, and 171,232 square feet of non-residential uses. As shown in Figure 3, the approved Site Plan comprises a multi-family building with ground floor retail and a commercial building fronting on Westbard Avenue, as well as 70 townhouses located on the western half of the Property, accessed by internal private streets. The Site Plan has two open spaces: Springfield Park is located at the northern portion of the Property fronting on Westbard Avenue, which has been constructed and conveyed to Montgomery Parks, and a privately owned

public open space (POPS), the Civic Green, which is located between the multifamily building and the commercial building.

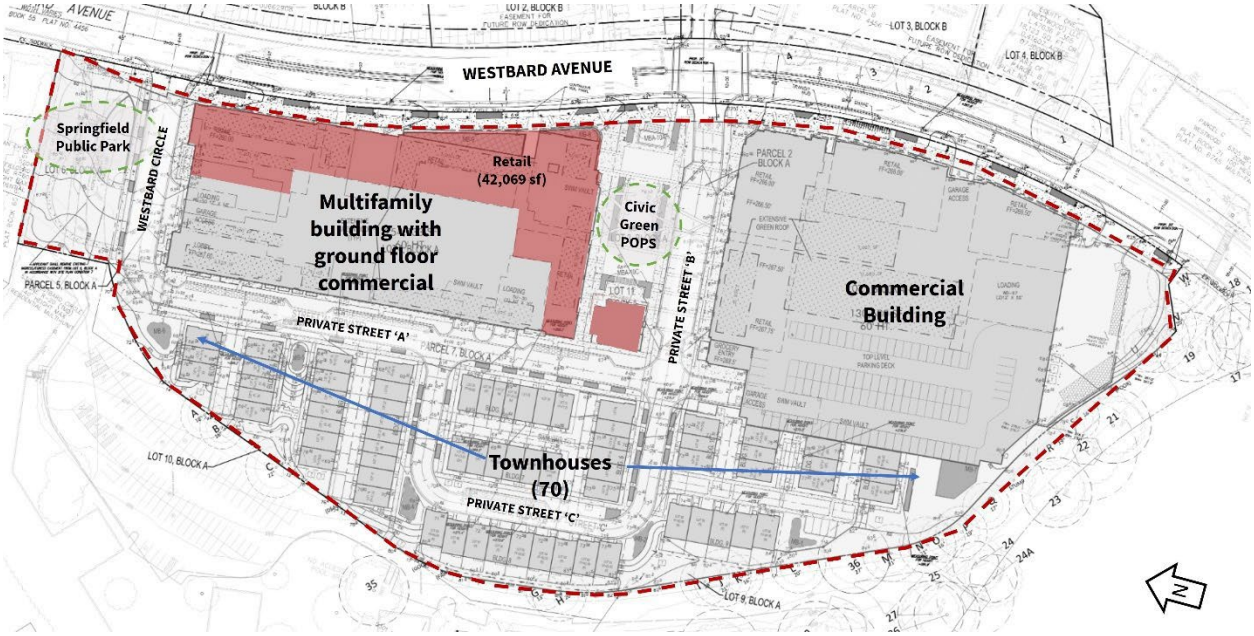

Figure 3 - Diagram of Site Plan No. 820180190

The multifamily building, which was the subject of Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019A, was approved for a maximum height of 60 feet for 200 multifamily units (with 12.5% MPDUs) and 42,069 square feet of ground-floor commercial space. It features loading and below-grade garage access for the multifamily units located off Westbard Circle, as well as loading and access for the retail located off Private Street A. Adjacent to the multifamily building next to Private Street B is the Civic Green, which also includes a one-story retail building. In 2025, the Planning Board approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019A to allow for the reduction of commercial density by 18,792 square feet, relocation of parking, and changes to the loading and garage access, building elevations, and the transformers' location by modifying Conditions 1, 22, and 25, and adding Condition 26.

In 2025, the Planning Director approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019B to designate outdoor seating areas adjacent to the previously approved commercial building with ground floor retail and restaurant uses.

PROPOSAL

The Applicant proposes the reduction of the public open space from 38,000 square feet (11.5%) to 32,794 square feet (10%), an adjustment to the areas of public open space depicted on the open space

plan, the continued use of artificial turf within the Civic Green, and the addition of a pergola in front of the Jewel Building.

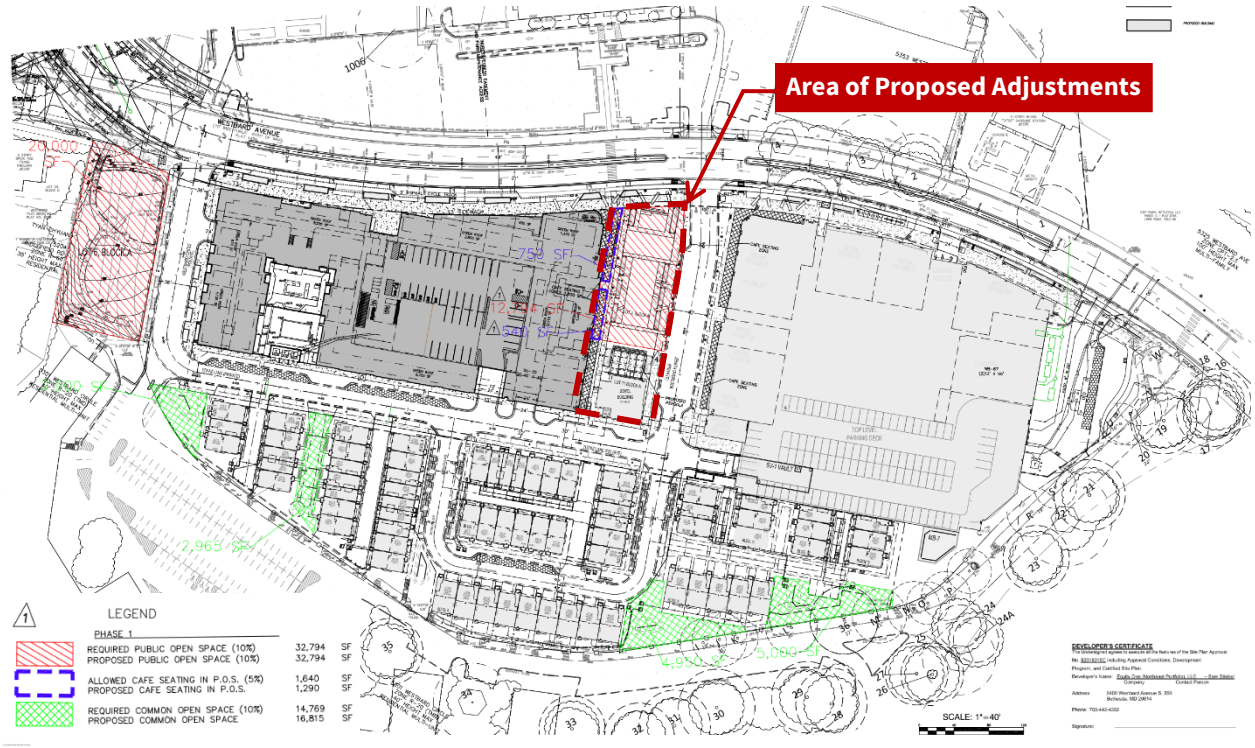

Figure 4 - Open Space Plan No. 82018019C

BUILDING/ARCHITECTURE

No major changes are proposed to the previously approved building design and architecture.

OPEN SPACE

The original Site Plan approved 38,000 square feet of public open space, which includes the Civic Green. Per the Applicant's Statement of Justification, as the Project has progressed through construction some modifications to the public open space calculations have proven to be necessary to account for final as-built conditions and the provision of outdoor seating areas along the Civic Green. Additionally, as part of the recent leasing of the Jewel Building, located at the western end of the Civic Green, it was discovered that the previous calculations included the area immediately in front of that building as public open space, when it was intended for outdoor seating associated with that private use. To account for these adjustments and to avoid the need for a future amendment, the Amendment seeks to reduce the mandated public open space to the minimum requirement of 32,794 square feet, or 10% of the site area. The design of the Project and how it is visually perceived is not

changing as part of this request. The common open space calculation for the condition was set at a minimum of 10% and is not changing.

The proposal also requests removal of Condition 25.j, which requires the Applicant to remove the artificial turf within the Civic Green and replace it with grass. Removing the condition would allow the Applicant to continue using artificial turf in this space. Per the Applicant's Statement of Justification, the change was made on the plans prior to Certified Site Plan, and upon installation it was determined that artificial turf would be more durable and sustainable for the area. The Applicant also states that subsequent to the installation of the artificial turf, the Civic Green has become a highly used community activity center that is retaining its appeal due to the selection of the turf. One of the most popular features of the public open space is a graded area that could not be seeded and would have to be leveled for the installation of grass.

The MNCPPC Recreation Guidelines define a "civic green" as "[a] significant public open space containing a variety of areas for recreation and leisure," and list certain design criteria such as providing "formally planned, flexible and programmable open space for public use" and "trees for shading, a substantial central lawn as a focal point, [and] multiple options for sitting."(MNCPPC Recreation Guidelines at 114). The Guidelines do not specifically address the type of materials a Project should use for the construction of lawn areas within a civic green. The Applicant states the request to use turf within the green does not conflict with the Recreation Guidelines and is consistent

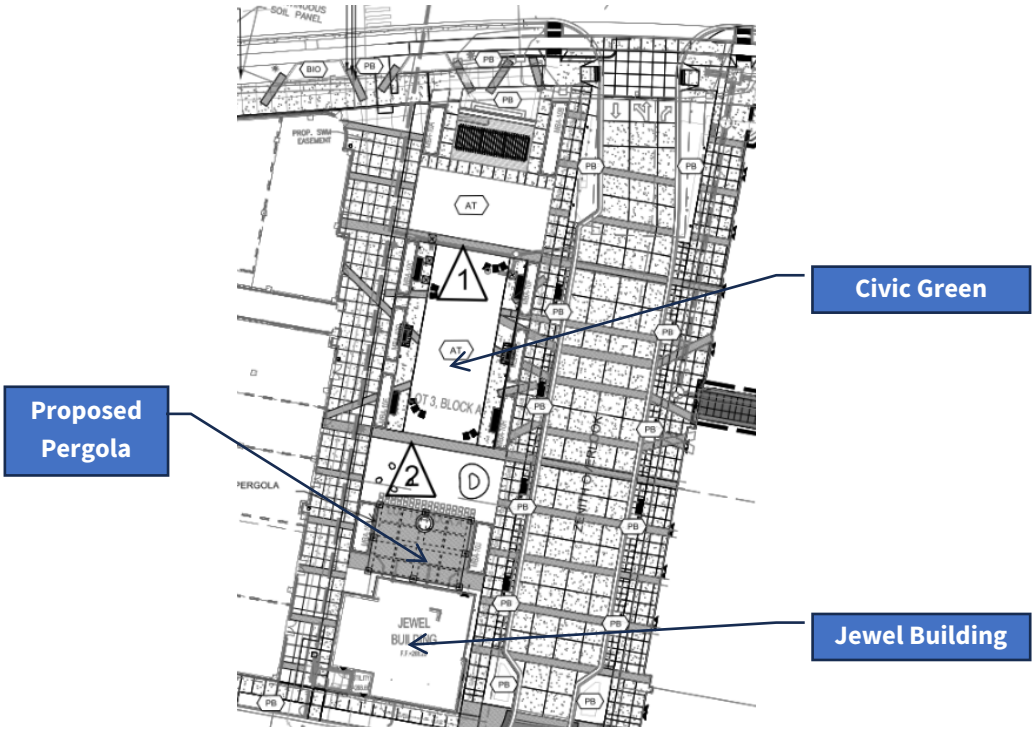

Figure 5 -Proposed layout of the pergola in front of the Jewel Building and the Civic Green

with the Guidelines' vision for the creation of durable, flexible, and programmable open spaces for the community's recreation and leisure.

Additionally, as part of its use of the outdoor seating area in front of the Jewel Building, the tenant proposes to construct a pergola to create a more formalized outdoor space and offer better protection from the elements. The specifics of this proposed structure are also included with the Application.

TRANSPORTATION

No changes are proposed to the previously approved street sections, streetscape, or public right-of-way.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

The Final Forest Conservation Plan (FFCP) for the 12.4-acre Property was certified on May 4, 2020. The Amendment has no material effect on the existing FFCP. However, a redline amendment plan has been submitted to document the final building footprints and related site features as required under a Final Forest Conservation Plan. The redlined FFCP will be revised per the conditions of approval to match the final Certified Site Plan.

SECTION 4: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Applicant has complied with all submittal and noticing requirements, and a pre-submittal public meeting was not required for this project.

Staff received several letters of correspondence throughout the review of the Project, which expressed concern with the overall Westbard area density and the proposed open space reduction. The Subject Application does not propose modifying the approved density per the Preliminary Plan and the revision to public open space meets the minimum 10% requirement of the Standard Method development standards.

SECTION 7: SITE PLAN AMENDMENT 82018019C FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The Planning Board approved Site Plan No.820180190, MCPB No. 19-033, to allow a maximum density of 540,524 square feet of total development, including 369,292 square feet of residential uses for up to 200 multifamily units and 70 townhouse units, and 171,232 square feet of non-residential uses on the Subject Property with conditions. The Planning Board also approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019A, MCPB No. 25-060, to allow the reduction of commercial density by 18,792 square feet, relocation of parking, and changes to the loading and garage access, building elevations, and the

transformers' location by modifying Conditions 1, 22, and 25, and adding Condition 26. The Planning Director approved Site Plan Amendment No. 82018019B to designate outdoor seating areas adjacent to the previously approved commercial building with ground floor retail and restaurant uses.

This Site Plan Amendment 82018019C requests the adjustment and reduction of the public open space from 38,000 SF (11.5%) to 32,794 SF (10%), to allow artificial turf within the Civic Green and add a pergola in front of the Jewel Building. The proposed Site Plan Amendment does not alter the intent of the previous findings, which remain applicable, except as modified below.

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

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

i. ***Division 4.5.3 CRT Zone, Standard Method***

The Amendment does not alter any of the previously approved development standards for the project, except for the amount of public open space provided. As shown in Table 1 below, the Amendment will reduce the amount of public open space provided; however, the decrease in public open space remains in conformance with the standards of Section 59-6 of the Zoning Ordinance for Standard Method development.

Table 1: Westwood Shopping Center, Site Plan amendment Data Table for CRT Zone, Standard Method, Section 59.4.5.3

Development Standard	**Permitted/ Required**	**Approved 820180190, 82018019A, 82018019B**	**Proposed**
Tract Area	n/a	540,524 sf (12.4 acres)	No change proposed.
Tract Area - Prior Dedication	n/a	20,584 sf	
Tract Area - Proposed Dedication	n/a	23,844 sf	
Site Area	n/a	496,096 sf (11.38 acres)	
Open Space (min s.f.) Public Open Space Common Open Space	 32,794 sf (10%) 16,815 sf (10%)	 38,000 sf (11.5%) 16,815 sf (10%)	 32,794 sf (10%) No change proposed.

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

(3) ***Division 6.3 Open Space and Recreation***

The Project, as approved, provided 11.5% public open space, while the Standard Method minimum requirement in the CRT Zone is 10% public open space. The

request to adjust the area and allocation of the public open space is limited to the Civic Green and the area West of the Civic Green (in front of the Jewel Building), and other areas of open space remain unchanged. Therefore, the intent of this development standard is met with the proposed amendment.

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

The proposed Amendment does not alter the previously approved parking, circulation patterns, or building massing. The Amendment request only proposes adjustments to the layout and a reduction of public open space and the conditions that govern the materials to be used in the Civic Green. While the addition of the pergola in front of the Jewel Building is intended for use associated with Jewel Building tenants, it also would enhance that character of the space and contributes to an improvement of the site amenities.

SECTION 9: CONCLUSION

As conditioned, Site Plan Amendment No. 82108019C satisfies the findings under Sections 59-7.3.3 and 7.3.4 and the applicable standards of the Zoning Ordinance, and substantially conforms to the recommendations of the 2016 *Westbard Sector Plan*. Therefore, Staff recommends approval of the Site Plan Amendment with the conditions specified at the beginning of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Site Plan Amendment
Attachment B: Statement of Justification
Attachment C: Previous Approvals
Attachment D: Community Correspondence