

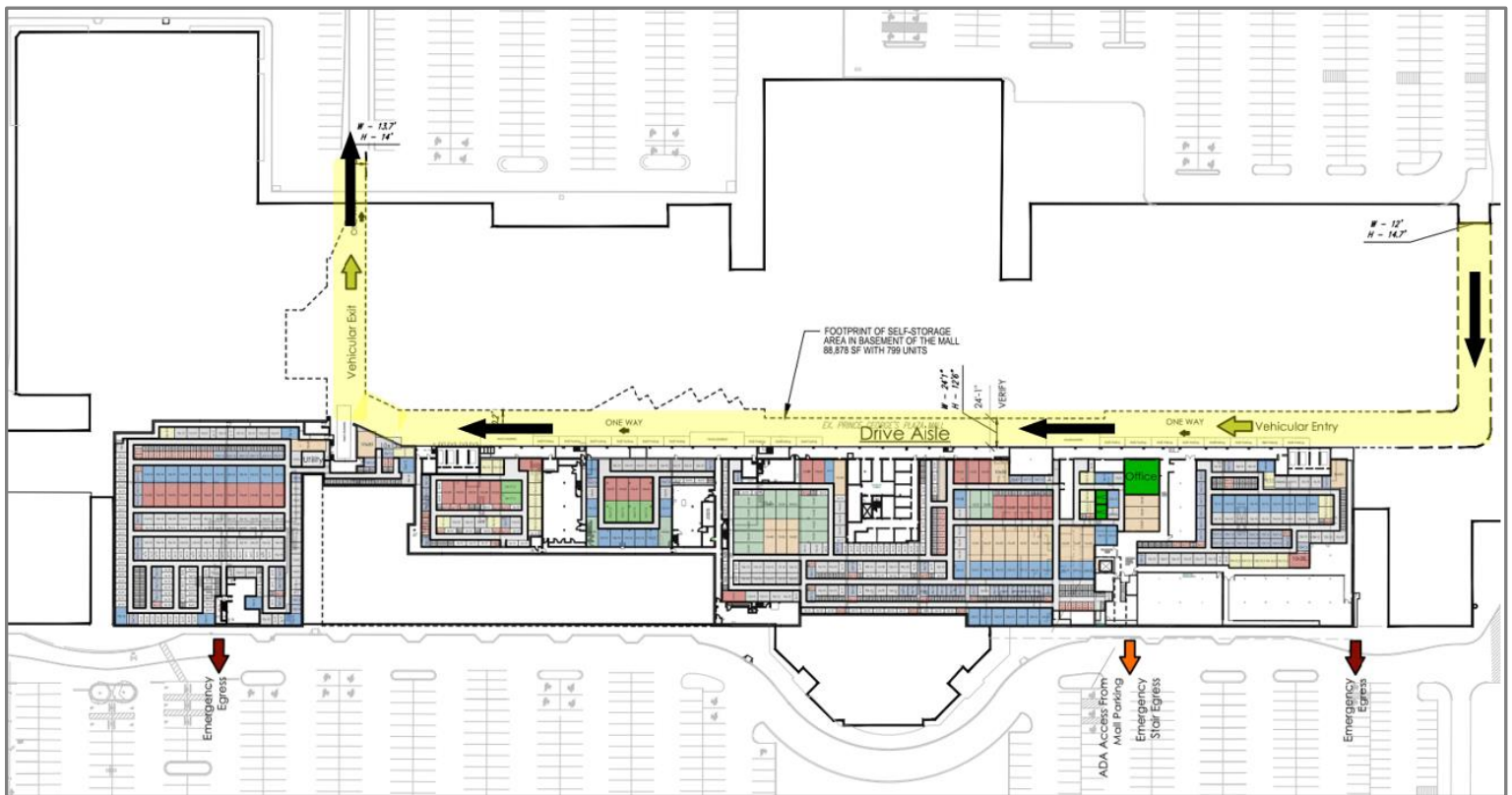
MPG is bound by roadways to the south and east – East West Highway and Belcrest Road. Multifamily dwellings reside to the north of the site and commercial office space to the west.

Project Summary

The 2016 Prince George’s Plaza TDDP does not permit consolidated storage within the M-U-I/T-D-O zone. The Prince George’s County Zoning Ordinance allows otherwise prohibited uses through an approved amendment to the TDDP’s Table of Uses. The purpose of the applicant’s detailed site plan (DSP-99044-20) is to permit consolidated storage units within the basement of the Mall at Prince George’s (MPG), and at no other location within the Transit District.

Approval of DSP-99044-20 would permit the conversion of existing subterranean storage space (existing basement area) of the Mall at Prince George’s into approximately 807 consolidated storage units of varying dimensions over 88,878 square feet. The entirety of the development would be located within the basement of MPG, including seventeen (17) parking spaces and four (4) loading spaces.

An image of the proposed facility can be seen below. The one-way vehicle aisle is highlighted in yellow with egress direction denoted with arrows.



Vehicular access to the site will be available via existing loading ramps along the north side of the mall. Circulation through the facility will be one-way only with vehicles entering via an existing ramp located on the eastern side of the mall (near Target) and exiting via an existing ramp along the western side of the mall (near JCPenney). Gates will control vehicular access to the storage facility and commercial delivery

areas. Gates will be open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm in the summer, and 7:00 am to 6:00 pm during the winter. Pedestrian access to the units will be available via a stairwell behind an existing storefront. Access to the storage area will be controlled via keypad.

Signage will be included at two locations:

1. Above the access ramp along the northern façade of the building denoting vehicular access
2. Above the storefront entrance denoting pedestrian access

Images of this proposed signage can be seen below.



Projected Traffic Generation

For comparison, the consolidated storage facility constructed about three years ago by the applicant at 7618 Marlboro Pike in District Heights has approximately 110,050 square feet of gross floor area and consisted of approximately 900 units. A facility this size generates 11 AM peak hour trips and 19 PM peak hour trips.

The Mall at Prince George's (MPG) consolidated storage facility is approximately 20% smaller in size with 88,878 square feet of gross floor area and with about 10% fewer units for a total of 807 storage units.

Based on these numbers, one would expect similar, if not less, traffic generation at the MPG facility. The applicant is anticipating the average number of vehicles visiting the site daily to be between 20 and 30.

Planning Committee Review

On May 18, 2021, the applicant presented this project to the Planning Committee for their review. Meeting minutes are attached for reference.

Generally, the Committee agreed that the self-storage facility is not the highest best use for the space but is not wholly inconsistent with the character area and an appropriate use for currently vacant subgrade space.

The Committee recognized that the Mall reorganizes and will continue to change over time. Though they stated that self-service storage may be an appropriate use for the space, there are still concerns regarding security and unwanted traffic flow.

As the space is currently empty and unused, the Committee agreed that adaptive reuse is better than no use, as long as it is not completely incongruous to the area. Especially with the current state of retail and its effects on malls, the proposed use could be a unique opportunity to make vacant space useful.

The Planning Committee recommends the City Council approve the amendment to the Table of Use to allow the adaptive reuse of unleaseable retail space in the basement of the MPG. This recommendation was passed unanimously.

Staff Comments

Storage operations are not permitted in TDO/MUI zones as it is typically an auto-centric use. This is true in the case of the TDO/MUI zones within the Prince George's Plaza Transit District Development Plan (TDDP). A relevant excerpt from the TDDP's Table of Uses can be seen on the following page (TDDP, p. 290).

Table 47. Table of Permitted Uses: Transit District Overlay/Mixed-Use Infill (T-D-O/M-U-I) Zone

USE	ZONE	
	M-U-I	T-D-O/M-U-I
(8) Transportation/Parking/Communications/Utilities:		
Airport, airpark, airfield, airstrip, heliport, helistop	SE	P ⁹
Antennas and related equipment buildings and enclosures, other than satellite dish antennas, in accordance with Section 27-464.03 (CB-65-2000)	P	P
Broadcasting studio (without tower)	P	P
Bus station or terminal	SE	P
Monopoles and related equipment buildings and enclosures, in accordance with Section 27-464.03 (CB-65-2000)	P	P
Moving and Storage Operation (CB-2-2016)	X	X
Parking garage, commercial	P	P

For storage operations, the Table of Uses references CB-002-2016. This bill is attached for reference.

Though a more pedestrian-focused use for the proposed space would be ideal, this specific site has few compatible uses and therefore difficulties securing a substantial tenant. As a subgrade space, it lacks visibility and activation.

Though the specifics of the site make it undesirable to tenants, it also minimizes potential negative impacts on the area. The facility will not take up valuable frontage for more pedestrian-friendly uses. The facility will have very little visual impacts on the area and does not require any additional exterior surface parking spaces.

This project is retrofitting an already existing, vacant space which has less of an impact on the surrounding area than pursuing new construction. This adaptive reuse aligns with the TDDP’s Policy EP3 which calls for supporting adaptive conversion of existing retail establishments to alternative uses (TDDP, p. 78). See excerpt below.

POLICY EP3 Promote and strengthen existing and start-up service business and retail establishments while supporting, where desired, their adaptive conversion to alternative uses in response to changing market opportunities.

Though storage use is not permitted in this zone, the unique circumstance of the site minimizes potential negative impacts to the area. With the self-service storage area being subgrade, the desired character and function of the area can be maintained while providing a needed service to residents and businesses.

Approval of this DSP will permit a viable use in a currently vacant space which will support the continued health of the Transit District’s main retail draw (TDDP, p. 35).

Next Steps

On September 20, the City Council will discuss and take action on this project. The Prince George’s Planning Board hearing for this application has been scheduled for October 14.