

Memo

To: Mayor and City Council

From: Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator and Director, Community & Economic Development
Taylor Robey, City Planner

Date: October 20, 2021

Re: Riverfront at West Hyattsville Multifamily Buildings – Detailed Site Plan 20053

Attachments:	Applicant’s Presentation	Sustain_DSP-20053
	ARCP-DSP-20053	LSLP-DSP-20053
	A-SOJ-AC-DSP-20053	NRI-002-2016-01
	A-SOJ-DSP-20053	NOIS-DSP-20053
	CIVP-DSP-20053	SWMP-DSP-20053

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City Council with staff recommendations related to the Detailed Site Plan (DSP) 20053, an application for a single multi-family building on Parcel 1 at the Riverfront at West Hyattsville Development site.

Project Summary

- The applicant, Gilbane Development Company, is proposing the construction of a mixed-use development containing 291 multifamily dwelling units and 3,213 square feet of retail.
- If approved, this development will be part of the greater Riverfront at West Hyattsville community.
- This application also includes the installation of infrastructure for a proposed second multifamily building on the southern adjacent parcel. A separate detailed site plan will be filed outlining the building’s proposed architecture, at a later date.

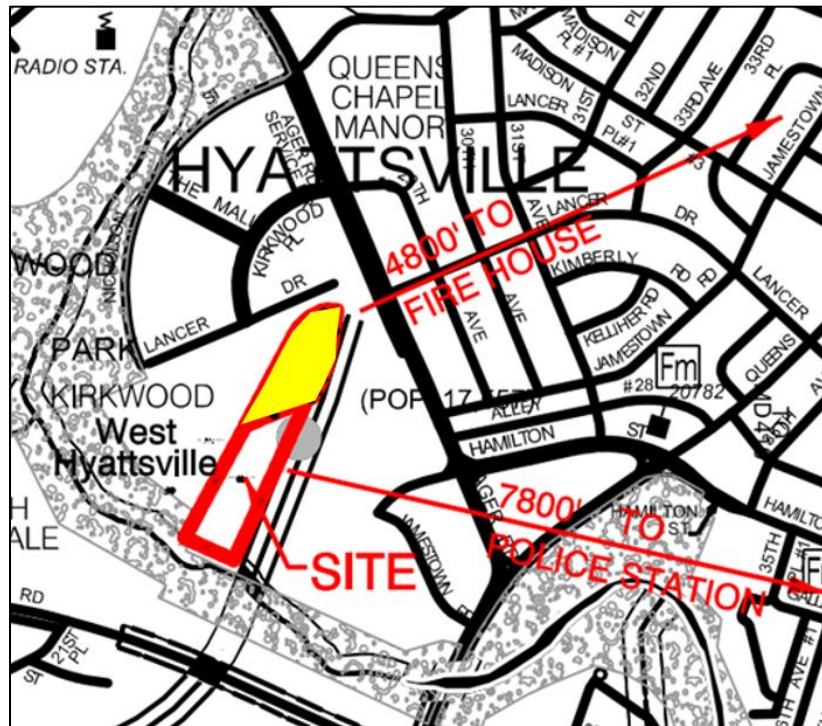
Project Location Details

The proposed development will be a part of the Riverfront at West Hyattsville project, located on Ager Road in Hyattsville, Maryland. The West Hyattsville Metro station is to the southeast of the subject property with Little Branch Run to the northwest of the property.

The subject property is zoned M-X-T (Mixed Use-Transportation Oriented) and is located within the boundaries of the 2006 Approved Transit District Development Plan for the West Hyattsville Transit District Overlay Zone.

The development will be located on a portion of a tract of land containing approximately 2.4 acres. The multi-family building being proposed in this application is located on the northern parcel, seen in yellow in the exhibit below.

Exhibit A



Summary of Development Proposal

The applicant, Gilbane Development Company, is proposing the construction of a mixed-use development containing 291 multifamily dwelling units and 3,213 square feet of retail, and a structured parking garage with 300 parking spaces on the subject property (Parcel 1).

Of the 291 multifamily units, the breakdown units by type are shown in the table below:

Unit Type	Count
Studio apartment	1
Junior one-bedroom	16
One-bedroom units (micro)	25
One-bedroom units	109
One-bedroom units with den	19
Two-bedroom units (micro)	15
Two-bedroom units	104
Three-bedroom units	4

A layout of the proposed multifamily building can be seen in Exhibit B below. The structured parking garage is highlighted in yellow; the interior courtyard is highlighted in green, and the residential space is highlighted in blue. The proposed retail spaces are on the southernmost portion of the proposed building along the pedestrian passage, which is shown in purple.

Exhibit B



This application also includes the installation of infrastructure for a future second multifamily building on the southern adjacent parcel (Parcel 2). A future detailed site plan will be filed outlining the building's proposed architecture at a later date.

The two (2) parcels are divided by an existing storm drain easement and a WSSC easement, located at the southern edge of Parcel 1. The applicant is proposing the construction of a pedestrian promenade along this easement shown in purple in Exhibit B. The public utility easement as a passage providing pedestrians and bicyclists direct access to the West Hyattsville Metro Station.

Resident Concerns: Planning Board Hearing

Several residents of the adjacent townhome community at the Riverfront of West Hyattsville registered to speak at the Planning Board Hearing regarding the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPS) application, on October 7, 2021.

Residents raised concerns about the proposed development blocking existing viewsheds of metro and open space. They also expressed concern regarding future construction noise, parking, and traffic.

Planning Committee Review

The applicant presented this project to Planning Committee at their October 19th meeting.

Committee members echoed concerns raised by residents at Planning Board pertaining to increased traffic and parking supply in the development. Committee members suggested applicant rework existing façade design to include more street level appeal and visual interest.

The Planning Committee adopted the following recommended conditions for consideration of the City Council:

- The Planning Committee sees the West Hyattsville Multifamily project as a welcomed addition to the community. We appreciate the art elements being incorporated into the project as well as the open space. We appreciate the architectural activation of the space with the inclusion of both vertical and horizontal features. Rec additional brick and other more traditional elements be included along the streetscape especially on the ground floor to break up the facade and create a more residential feel.
- The Planning Committee recommends the City Council encourage the developer to increased accessibility to the site for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- The Planning Committee has concerns about the number of parking spaces available for visitors. We want to ensure the developer adequately meet the parking needs of both residents and visitors.
- The Planning Committee recommends the bike storage capacity be increased within the West Hyattsville Multifamily project.
- The Planning Committee has concerns with the potential noise and vibrational impacts to residents of the West Hyattsville Multifamily project. Given the experience in other areas of Hyattsville, the allowable noise mitigation for residential buildings may be inadequate. The Planning Committee recommends the City Council encourage developers to pay close attention to the noise mitigation within the project and go beyond what is required.

Additionally, the Planning Committee continues to encourage the developer to work with the City, other parties, and programs, such as Amazon’s Housing Equity Fund, to support the City’s Affordable Housing Strategy.

Variance Request

The applicant is requesting modifications to twelve (12) elements of the TDDP Development Standards. Details of each modification is outlined in the applicant’s Statement of Justification pages 89 - 103 and summarized in the table below:

Modification	Required	Proposed Change	Applicant Reasoning
1(a) Ground Floor Retail	Buildings shall provide retail on all ground floor elevations.	Retail uses are proposed only in the southernmost portion of the building and along the pedestrian trail on the southeast side of the building.	Market does not support retail along entire ground floor facade. Vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic does provide sufficient market to allow for small amount of retail along the southeast side of the building.
1(b) Shared Parking	Building parking areas (off-street) shall be...shared by multiple owners/uses.	Single use parking garage.	The parking garage is intended to be a secure facility which will only be accessible by the residents and staff of the residential building. As noted, a small amount of retail is located along the southern facade of the building but is primarily intended to serve residents of the development, pedestrians and bicyclists utilizing the trail system being incorporated into the project. It is anticipated that a small number of vehicles will utilize the retail space. Based upon the total square footage proposed, a maximum of six parking spaces can be provided to serve this use. There is sufficient parking spaces along Little Branch Run, which will be available to the general public, to satisfactorily serve this limited parking need. Providing public accessibility to the garage for six spaces has a major impact on the design of the garage and the security of the garage.
2(a) Build-to line façade percentage on Little Branch Run	75% frontage buildout	64%	The applicant is proposing shorter, walkable residential blocks with bisecting vehicular alleys.
2(b) Maximum Block Length	Block lengths shall be a maximum of 400 feet in length	The block length of Parcel 1 is 841.24 feet	For these reasons, the applicant has designed the building with a substantial break in the middle of the facade to create two building blocks of less than 400 feet in length. This break in the building provides the impression of a break in the block as intended by the TDDP.
2(c) Rear Yard Line	12-foot setback	10.5-foot setback	Curvature of the site means exact distance varies from 27.8 ft – 10.5 ft.
3(a) Landscaping of Building Fronts	"Building fronts (public), along the streetscape, shall provide planters and window boxes with flowering plants within two feet of the building face."	None	Landscaping is provided along the building base along the entire streetscape. However, planters and window boxes with flowering plans are not proposed. The style and design of the building is not conducive to window boxes and the applicant prefers planting in the ground as opposed to planters.
3(b) Location of Mechanical Equipment	Transformers shall be a minimum of 25 feet away from any build-to line.	Transformers are proposed within 25 feet of the build-to line.	The location of transformers is strictly controlled by PEPCO standards. The location of transformers less than 25 feet from the build-to line is a result of these standards. The transformers will be attractively screened to ensure that they are not prominently visible from the streetscape.
4 Permitted Materials	"Brick, precast pavers, Belgium block, or granite pavers are permitted materials."	Stamped concrete.	The sidewalks will be constructed to the City of Hyattsville Standards.
5(a) Configurations and Techniques	Specific Minimum and Maximum Foot Candle levels for certain locations.	Lighting levels as depicted on the DSP.	In certain areas, the existence of underground utilities limits the location of fixtures or the lighting levels conflict, creating areas of spill over. In these areas, the photometric plan reflects a wider range of light levels than the requirement. While

			adequate lighting is provided throughout the property, the minimum footcandles for each specific area is not achieved in all locations.
5(b) Public Street Lighting-Lighting Fixtures	Incandescent, metal halide, or halogen only.	LED lighting is proposed.	As the cost of LED lighting lowered, it became the common replacement for old-fashioned incandescent lighting, as they last much longer and use far less electricity than standard lighting. The standards in the TDDP are outdated and not consistent with energy-efficient and sustainable building design practices.
6(a) Block Size	No block face shall exceed 400 feet in length.	A block length of 841.24 feet is proposed.	The shape of the property is unusual in that it curves along Little Branch Run for approximately a third of its length. This curvature makes dividing the property into two separate and distinct blocks more complicated. This standard recommends that “a street, common access easement, alley or pedestrian pathway” be provided to break up the building massing. In this instance, the Applicant has set the central part of the building where the residential entrance is back between 28-49 feet to break up the building mass as recommended by the TDDP. An actual break in the building in this location would not accomplish the goal of creating greater parcel connectivity because the property backs to the Metro rail tracks.
6(b) Alleys and Dedicated Right-Of-Way for Alleys	Alleys shall provide access to the rear of all building lots and off-street parking facilities. Where not constructed, right of way for an alley must be dedicated.	No alley is proposed to be constructed or dedicated	The site is constrained by the location of the metro rail line, which undergrounds behind the building. There is no adjacent development which could access or benefit from providing an alley. Further, the applicant is extending a pedestrian walkway along the rear of the building to access the metro station through the existing pedestrian tunnel. This pedestrian walkway will accomplish same purpose as an alley in that it will connect the property to the metro station. Vehicular access through the pedestrian tunnel is not permitted.
7 Irrigation	All sod and ground cover will provide an automatic irrigation system.	No automatic irrigation system proposed.	In DSP-06029, the District Council approved an amendment to remove the requirement for an automatic irrigation system provided that native plant species be used. Consistent with the prior approval, the applicant is proposing that drought tolerant species be used which will require less irrigation; therefore, an irrigation system for these is not necessary.
8(a) Windows and Doors/Entrances	Windows shall be no closer than 30 inches to building corners.	Windows are placed closer than 30 inches to exterior building corners. An exhibit showing where the windows are within 30 inches of the building corners is attached hereto as Exhibit “B”.	Windows have been placed on the facade based upon functional furniture layout and to let in maximum daylight for healthy living. As such, some windows are closer than 30 inches to the exterior building corners.
8(a) Windows and Doors/Entrances cont.	Windows shall allow a minimum 60% of surface view into the building for a depth of at least 20 feet (ground floor only).	The windows do not allow a minimum 60% surface view into the residential units to a depth of 20 feet.	This standard presumes that the entire ground floor of the building will be retail. Where the building does provide retail use, the standard is complied with. However, the majority of the first floor of the building will be occupied by residential dwelling units, where 60% surface view is not appropriate.
9 Signage	Building signage shall be illuminated	Internally illuminated signage proposed for	The signage package for the proposed building is intended to enhance the visual appeal of the project and promote pedestrian accessibility and safety without contributing to

	with external lighting only.	some blade and retails signs.	visual clutter. The location of the retail uses along the southern facade of the building accessible to pedestrians and bicyclists requires adequate signage. The retail signs will be internally illuminated so that the space is easily identifiable. Visibility from the Metro is also desired for placemaking purposes, as the building is not readily accessible from Ager Road. As a result, some blade signs will also be internally illuminated. The signage only promotes safety without contributing to visual clutter. Thus, the intent of the design standard is satisfied.
10 Off-street Parking Structures	For off-street parking structures, landscaping shall be provided in a 5' wide bed along the foundation that fronts the public realm at the rate of one tree (2.5-inch caliper) and three shrubs (24-inch height per ten linear feet of parking façade.	None.	The rear of the parking garage is not visible from a public street. However, a pedestrian walkway to the Metro and the Metro tracks extends along the rear of the parking garage. If this is interpreted as the foundation fronting on the public realm, a modification is required. The area behind the garage is proposed to be utilized as a dog park for the benefit of the residents. As such, landscaping along the foundation of the garage within the dog park is not appropriate. Rather, planting is proposed along the perimeter of the dog park in the form of trees, ground cover and shrubs. The location of landscaping along the outside of the dog park will served the same purpose as the foundation planting, but also screen the dog park. Further, the rear of the garage and its foundation are proposed to be painted as a mural to provide additional architectural interest. The combination of these treatments will fulfill the intent of the TDDP.
11 Parking Standards; Off-Street Parking	Prohibited materials: concrete masonry units and concrete (except for parking deck surfaces). Parking structure facades visible to the public realm shall consist of brick, brick with concrete banding, brick with glass block banding or other material as specified in the permitted materials list.	The parking garage is constructed of precast concrete with a foundation of gray masonry block.	The parking garage is constructed of precast concrete which will be painted with public art to provide an attractive and playful façade facing the Metro tracks. The base of the garage is constructed of gray masonry blocks which will also be painted to match. This provision is clearly meant to apply only to facades visible from the public realm. The garage is screened from the street with liner buildings. The rear of the garage is visible from a pedestrian walkway to the Metro and the Metro tracks. The applicant is also proposing to locate a dog park for use by the residents along this façade, the exterior of which will be landscaped. The combination of façade treatments and activities proposed for this façade will ensure that it is attractive when viewed either from the existing pedestrian walkway or the Metro.
12 Parking Standards; Off-Street Parking	Parking structure openings shall provide a minimum of 75% transparency to provide visibility for pedestrian safety. Parking structure entry portals may be set back up to 24	The parking structure will not be visible from the street. It will be a secure garage only accessible by the residents. The garage door will be a roll up door with no transparency. The garage entry portal will also be set back 82 feet from the surrounding	The parking garage standards are designed to ensure that public garages along the public street are attractive and compatible with the architecture of the building they serve. In this instance, the garage is integral to the building and will be fully screened from the street, except for the entry doors. Further, as discussed elsewhere, the building entry and the entry to the garage are set back from the street frontage to provide a break in the building. This break is not only located at the building entrance, but also provides a visual break along the street frontage, since a separate block is not being created. The setback provided addresses the concern about pedestrian safety which could result from a garage setback only 24 inches

	<p>inches behind the surrounding façade.</p> <p>Glass facades will be provided for parking structure stairwells for high visibility and openness to enhance pedestrian safety, steps shall provide open risers to increase visibility</p> <p>Parking structure elevators shall be constructed of glass walls to provide an open view to provide pedestrian safety and enhanced visibility</p>	<p>façade. No glass façade is provided</p>	<p>from the pedestrian zone. The garage is a secure facility, only accessible to residents and staff of the residential building. The residential units and the garage share a common elevator. As such, it will not be a glass elevator, and with the security provided within the building, this is not required from a security standpoint. The steps within the garage in the stairwells will be precast concrete and will not have open risers. Again, with the security provided, the addition visibility is not needed for pedestrian safety. Thus, based on the design of the building and the parking garage, modifications from these standards are appropriate.</p>
12 Parking Standards; Off-Street Parking cont.	Parking structure lighting shall be 250W metal halide.	The parking structure lights will be LED.	As noted above, the TDDP reflects technology as of 2006. The current technology is to use LED lighting, which is more energy efficient. The intent of this regulation is satisfied with the use of LED lighting.
12 Parking Standards; Off-Street Parking cont.	Parking structures shall have 10-foot 6-inch ceilings.	The first floor of the parking structure has a 9.0" foot ceiling.	The purpose of this design standard is not stated. The parking garage is designed such that each parking level provides direct access to the residential floor. The design provides this alignment for ease of access to the residential building. A typical residential floor-to-floor height is 10'-8" with a 9'0" clear ceiling height.

Staff Analysis & Recommendations

Based on Planning Committee recommendations, review of applicant materials and proposed modifications, staff recommends the following:

- Staff supports modification to Ground Floor Retail standard to the proposed square footage of retail in the southernmost portion of the building and along the pedestrian trail on the southeast side of the building.
- The curvature of the site near Little Branch Run presents unique challenges to meeting Maximum Block Length, Block Size, and Rear Yard Line standards. Staff supports modifications on these requirements to the degree outlined in applicants SOJ given site constraints.
- Staff supports modification of 'Irrigation' standard given the District Council approved an amendment to remove the requirement for an automatic irrigation system provided that native and drought tolerant plant species be used.
- Staff recommends no additional action on traffic at this time but will continue to monitor and study as more development occurs in this area. Traffic Impact Analysis conducted by Lenhart Traffic Consulting, on behalf of the applicant, demonstrates signalized and unsignalized intersections surrounding the study area are operating to Prince George's County standards.
- Staff recommends that off-street parking structure be shared or public facilities to reduce pressure on street parking. Following guidance provided in the Prince George's Plaza TDDP Policy

TM18 adopted in 2016, staff finds 6 spaces for non-residential use inadequate and recommends at least 25 percent of their spaces be available for hourly and/or daily rental by the public. Staff requires that property owners and developers unbundle, or separate, the cost of off-street parking from the costs of housing or commercial space. This may be achieved by the applicant by use of 'flex' spaces that may be available for retail or residential use, based on market demand.

- Staff supports EV charging stations within structured parking garage with capacity for conversion of additional charging stations should demand increase. Locations of EV charging stations shall be detailed in the applicant's exhibit(s).
- Staff supports modification of Location of Mechanical Equipment standard to adhere to PEPCO standards. Staff supports efforts to improve aesthetics and screen transformers to ensure that they are not prominently visible from the streetscape.
- Staff supports modification to Signage standards to allow internally illuminated signage for some blade and retail signs to improve visibility and wayfinding from the Metro. Staff supports implementing graphic heavy wayfinding signage in both English and Spanish.
- Staff supports implementation of LED lighting in both the parking structure and public streetlights. Staff agrees that lighting technology has changed significantly since adoption of the TDDP in 2006 and supports implementation of energy efficient lighting. Staff supports modification of Specific Minimum and Maximum Foot Candle levels for certain locations so long as the overall lighting pattern throughout the length of the promenade ensures the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Staff concurs with Planning Committee in its encouragement of the applicant to pursue opportunities to pursue financing through programs, such as Amazon's Housing Equity Fund, to support the City's Affordable Housing Strategy.
- Staff supports modifications to off street parking standards. Staff supports modification to parking space size be 8.5' x 18.5' for reasons outlined in Exhibit D in the applicant's Statement of Justification.
- Staff recommends a significant increase in bike storage proposed by the applicant, given the property's proximity to Metro and the Anacostia Tributary Trail System. Staff recommends the applicant achieve a 2 (RDU) – 1 (dedicated bicycle parking space) ratio, which may include a combination of vertical bike storage included in an indoor bike room and secured outdoor bicycle storage. Staff recommends the applicant consider additional covered bike storage outside building with private fob entry, integration of double-deck bike racks to increase capacity, and basic bike repair stand like the College Park Metro Bike Facility shown in Exhibit C. Additionally, staff recommends wayfinding and an assistive door device at the street-level pedestrian entrance to the garage to ensure safety and ease of access for cyclists utilizing bike parking within the structure parking garage.

Exhibit C: College Park Metro Enclosed Bike Facility.



Timeline and Next Steps

The applicant presented to the City Council on October 18th and to the Planning Committee on October 19th.

The Prince George’s County Planning Board hearing for this case is scheduled for December 16th. Any recommendation adopted by the City Council at the November 15, 2021 meeting will be conveyed to the Planning Board before the Hearing.

Staff is recommending the following motion:

“I move the City Council authorize the Mayor to provide correspondence to the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission in support of DSP-20053, Riverfront at West Hyattsville, subject to the conditions stated above”