



FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
October 14, 2015

TITLE: **Russell Property-Lot 1 Building "A"**

FILE NUMBER: **SP-04-11, AP 15388, APFO 15389, FRO 15390**

REQUEST: **Site Development Plan Approval**
The Applicant is requesting Planned Commercial/Industrial Development site development plan approval for construction of a 30,120 square foot office/warehouse building, on a 3.84-acre site.

PROJECT INFORMATION:

ADDRESS/LOCATION: Buckeystown Pike located north of English Muffin Way

TAX MAP/PARCEL: Tax Map 86, Parcel 175

COMP. PLAN: Limited Industrial

ZONING: Limited Industrial

PLANNING REGION: Adamstown

WATER/SEWER: W-3/S-3

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVES:

APPLICANT: St. Johns Properties

OWNER: St. Johns Properties

ENGINEER: Harris, Smariga and Associates, Inc.

ARCHITECT: N/A

ATTORNEY: N/A

STAFF: Tolson DeSa, Principal Planner II

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit 1-Site Plan Rendering
Exhibit 2-Russell Lot 1 Modification Requests

STAFF REPORT

ISSUE

Development Request

The Applicant is requesting Planned Commercial/Industrial Development site plan approval for a 30,120 square foot office/warehouse building, on a 3.84-acre site. The proposed "Office" use is being reviewed as an "Office Business" land use under the heading of **Commercial Business and Personal Service**. The proposed "Warehouse" use is being reviewed as a "Wholesaling and/or Warehouse" land use under the heading of **Wholesaling and Processing** per §1-19-5.310 Use Table in the Zoning Ordinance. Both uses are principal permitted uses in the Limited Industrial (LI) Zoning District subject to Planned Commercial/Industrial site development plan approval, (see Graphic #1)

This project is also being reviewed and approved under the provisions of Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-10.300 Planned Commercial/Industrial Development Standards. The purpose of the Planned Commercial/Industrial Development provisions, in part, is to allow for more than 1 principal use or building on a single lot in the GC, ORI, LI and GI zoning districts.

Modification Requests:

1. §1-19-6.220.A.1: The Applicant is seeking a parking space modification for the 35 spaces over target.
2. §1-19-6.210.D: The Applicant is seeking a loading space modification for an increase in the number of loading spaces on site from 3 to 4.
3. §1-19-6.220.B.2: The Applicant is seeking FCPC approval for increasing the width of the two-way drive aisle from the recommended 24' to the proposed 28' for increased truck circulation and maneuverability throughout the site.
4. §1-19-6.500.G: The Applicant is seeking a Lighting spillage modification for the lot lines interior to the overall Russell Development.

Graphic #1: Russell Lot 1: Site Aerial



Russell Property Lot 1

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BACKGROUND

Development History

The original property (approximately 140 acres) from which this subject property was developed, has the following re-zoning history:

- The original property was zoned Agriculture on the 1959 Frederick County Zoning Map.
- A 1970 rezoning changed the zoning to Residential Mobile Home District.
- The entire original site was comprehensively rezoned to Planned Unit Development (PUD) in 1972.
- The 1977 Zoning Maps were updated in 1989, and showed a 1988 rezoning of the property into several zones, but primarily Office/Research/Industrial (ORI) for about 95% of the Russell Property.
- The 2000/2001 Adamstown Comprehensive Rezoning process changed the ORI zoning to limited industrial (LI).

On August 16, 2006, the FCPC approved a Combined Preliminary Plat/Final Site Plan Application for 6 industrial lots containing 11 office/warehouse buildings for a total of 413,730 square feet on 104.45 acres.

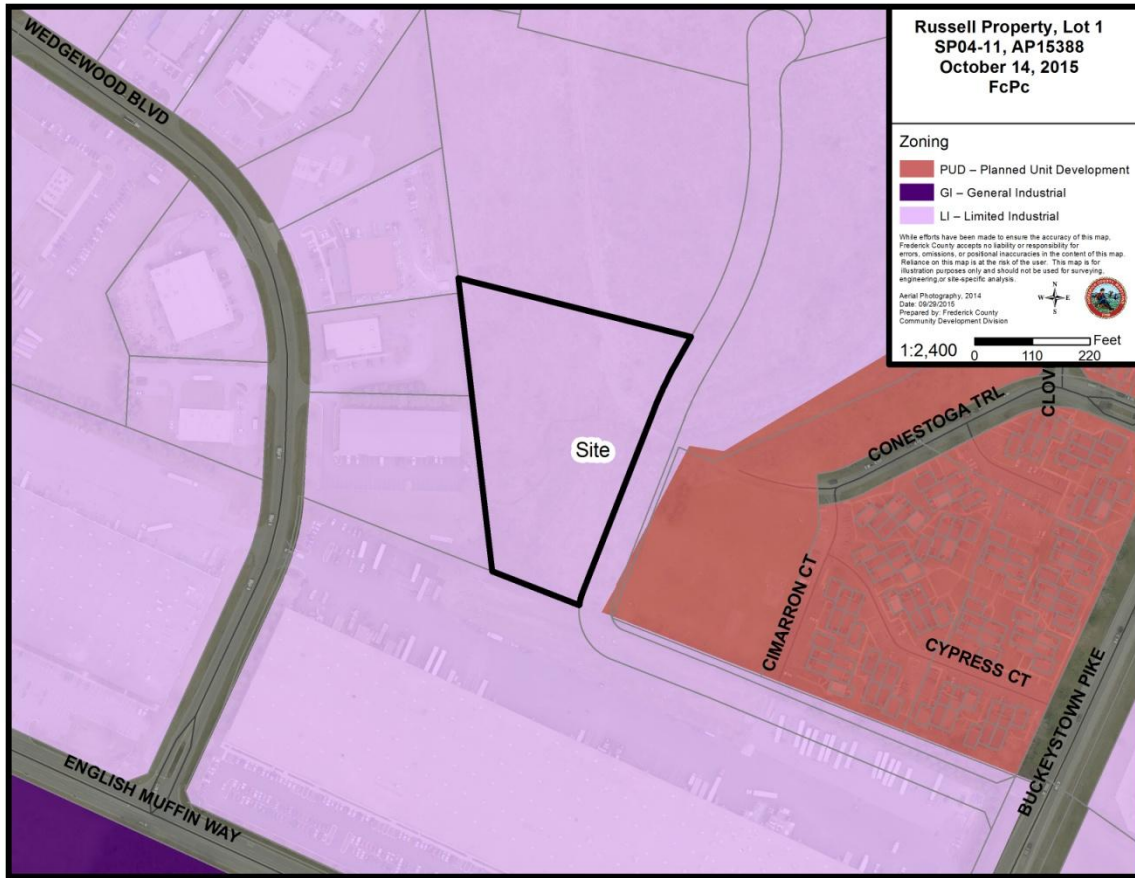
- At the time, the Preliminary Plan (AP 4164), received a three year approval with an 8/16/2009 expiration date. Under Ord. #9-23-527 the expiration date was extended three years to 8/16/2012. In 2011, under a second ordinance, the project's expiration date was further extended to 8/16/2015. The Applicant has recorded all of the plats for the 6 lots shown on the Russell Preliminary Plan and therefore has vested the Preliminary Plan.
- APFO (AP 4042) approval was originally granted for three years or until 8/16/2009. Similar to the Preliminary Plan, the APFO was also extended twice, resulting in an expiration date of 8/16/2015. The Applicant has recorded all of the plats for the 6 lots shown on the Russell Preliminary Plan and has paid all of the required escrow payments, and therefore has vested the APFO portion of the Preliminary Plan.
- The original approval period for the Russell Site Plan (AP 4041) was two years, with an 8/16/2008 expiration date. The Site Plan approval was also extended twice to 8/16/2014, and expired on that date.

Staff worked with the Applicant over the last few months toward plat recordation and vesting prior to expiration. As part of that process the project was resubmitted for site plan review. Staff worked with the Applicant to bring the previously approved site plan further into compliance with the existing Code within the confines of the recorded plats and avoiding complete redesign of the project.

Existing Site Characteristics

The site is currently zoned LI, and is vacant but graded, undeveloped land. The Russell Property is surrounded by limited industrial development to the north, south and west (see Graphic #2 below). Wedgewood Business Park is located to the south and is largely built out. The owner of Wedgewood Business Park was required to provide a 50' right-of-way for Wedgewood Boulevard to the Russell Property. Westview South MXD is located to the north, but no public road connection exists at this time.

Graphic #2: Rusell Lot 1 Zoning



A small area of residential development is located to the southeast (Countryside Planned Unit Development) and a National Historic Register site (Arcadia) is also located to the southeast of this site.

ANALYSIS

Summary of Development Standards Findings and Conclusions

The site presents several issues that added challenges to the development of this project.

1. Adjacent Residential Development:

- a. The Russell Property development surrounds the Countryside PUD (approximately 35 acres) on the south, west and northern sides. Originally, the entire area of the Russell development site was part of a residential PUD. Only a 30-acre portion was actually developed with attached single family units. An additional 5-acre buffer behind the units was added, creating a total of 35 acres within Countryside PUD.
- b. To address the limited site-access problems, the Applicant acquired land from the adjoining Countryside PUD development. The Applicant worked with the Home Owners Association (HOA) to acquire the additional land needed for a safe entry, and a benign level of impact on wetlands, floodplain and the historic structures on the site.
- c. The Russell Property Road Development Plan adds landscape improvements designed to mitigate the effects of a built residential development that is surrounded by planned industrial development.

2. Limited Site Access:

- a. A short dead-end road "Conestoga Trail" serves the Countryside townhouse development. An extension of Conestoga trail was explored by the Applicant. This entrance was not considered feasible or desirable, due to the negative effects of routing a significant amount of industrial traffic through a residential area.
- b. SHA spacing requirements for a bridge expansion across Ballenger Creek and Ballenger Creek floodplain and impacts to the Arcadia Mansion prevented the Applicant from developing a site entry north of the Arcadia Mansion Farm.
- c. The Russell Property is located next to the Westview South MXD. However, no internal road connection was required by the Planning Commission during the approval process for Westview South. Staff and the Applicant worked to show a potential connection to the north of proposed Lot 4 to connect to the built Executive Court South.

Detailed Analysis of Findings and Conclusions

Site Development Plan Approval shall be granted based upon the criteria found in §1-19-3.300.4 Site Plan Review Approval Criteria of the Frederick County zoning ordinance.

Site Development §1-19-3.300.4 (A): Existing and anticipated surrounding land uses have been adequately considered in the design of the development and negative impacts have been minimized through such means as building placement or scale, landscaping, or screening, and an evaluation of lighting. Anticipated surrounding uses shall be determined based upon existing zoning and land use designations.

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Dimensional Requirements/Bulk Standards §1-19-6.100:** §1-19-6.100 of the Zoning Ordinance stipulates the setback requirements for the LI zone and the minimum lot area for the proposed use. The setback requirements are 25-foot front and 20-foot rear, and side yards shall be equal to the height of the structure. The proposed building location exceeds minimum setback requirements and the proposed building height is 19 feet. The proposed plan meets the required Bulk/Dimensional requirements.
2. **Signage §1-19-6.300:** In accordance with Zoning Ordinance (Z.O.) Section 1-19-6.320, the Applicant is entitled to 544 square feet of signage. The Applicant is proposing signage for Building "A", not to exceed 228 square feet. The proposed sign adheres to the sign setback requirements of Section 1-19-6.300. The Applicant has provided an overall signage breakdown for the entire Russell Development Project on Sheet 4 of the site plan.
3. **Landscaping and Screening §1-19-6.400:** The Applicant has proposed a landscape plan in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-6.400. The proposed plan includes street trees, parking lot landscaping, and screening along exterior property lines. The Applicant has provided increased landscaping treatments throughout the site in order to come into compliance with the current landscape ordinance regulations.
4. **Lighting §1-19-6.500:** The Zoning Ordinance provides that pole and building mounted lighting shall not exceed a maximum height of 24 feet for industrial uses. The Applicant has submitted a lighting plan that proposes 24 foot tall pole lights as well as 18 foot tall building mounted lights throughout the Site which comply with zoning ordinance requirements. The Applicant's plan does propose lighting levels over 0.5 foot candles, in three areas along the interior property boundary between Lot 1 and Lot 2 to the north. Therefore, in accordance with Z.O. Section 1-19-6.500.G the Applicant is requesting a modification for the spillage along the interior property line (See Exhibit #2). Staff has no objection to the light spillage proposed due to the industrial park design as well as providing improved levels of lighting and safety for the users of all lots and the overall

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Russell industrial development. Lighting is required to be designed and installed to be fully shielded and directed downward. Prior to site development plan final signature approval, the Applicant shall add text to Site Plan Note 9 that states that lighting shall comply with section 1-19-6.500 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Conditions:

1. Per Z.O. §1-19-6.500.G: The Applicant is seeking a Lighting spillage modification for the lot lines interior to the overall Russell Development.

Transportation and Parking §1-19-3.300.4 (B): *The transportation system and parking areas are adequate to serve the proposed use in addition to existing uses by providing safe and efficient circulation, and design consideration that maximizes connections with surrounding land uses and accommodates public transit facilities. Evaluation factors include: on-street parking impacts, off-street parking and loading design, access location and design, vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation and safety, and existing or planned transit facilities.*

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Access/Circulation:** The Applicant is proposing a single public road (cul-de-sac) of 2,100 feet, located off of MD 85 (Arcadia Drive). The Applicant has worked with Staff and has agreed to provide a 50' wide right-of-way and to construct a private road to the south of proposed Lot 4 (not part of this application) in order to serve as a future full movement connection to Wedgewood Boulevard. This connection would eventually provide redundant access with both MD 85 and Wedgewood Boulevard.

The Applicant is proposing an on-site 28' two-way drive aisle in order to provide increased efficiency for truck circulation and maneuverability throughout the site. An increase in drive aisle width may be granted when recommended by the Community Development Division Traffic Engineer and approved by the Planning Commission. Staff has no objection to increasing the width of the two-way drive isle from the recommended 24' to the proposed 28' for the purpose stated.

2. **Connectivity §1-19-6.220 (F):** The Applicant has worked with Staff and has agreed to provide a 50' wide right-of-way and construct a private road to the south of proposed Lot 4 (not part of this application) in order to serve as a future full movement connection to Wedgewood Boulevard.

The Applicant has also worked with Staff in order to provide an access easement to the west of Lot 4 (not part of this application) in order to connect to the existing Executive Court South cul-de-sac within the Westview South MXD. This potential connection would provide further redundancy and provide through-movement access to Executive Drive.

3. **Public Transit:** This Site is served by the MD 85 Commuter Shuttle, which runs Monday through Friday and drops off/picks up at Wedgewood Boulevard and English Muffin Way in the adjoining Wedgewood development. Although not yet funded, Transit is planning to expand this route to full *Connector* status, thus increasing the days of service and improving headways.
4. **Vehicle Parking and Loading §1-19-6.200-through 1-19-6.220:** The zoning ordinance requires 1 parking space for every 300 square feet of office space. The Applicant is proposing 18,072 square feet of office space for Building "A"; therefore, 61 parking spaces are required. The Applicant is proposing 12,048 square feet of warehouse space for Building "A"; therefore, 13 parking spaces are required.

Based on these calculations, the Applicant is required to provide a total of 74 required parking spaces; the Applicant has provided 109 parking spaces, including 6 handicapped accessible parking spaces in accordance with the code requirements.

In accordance with Z.O. §1-19-6.220.A.1 the Applicant is seeking a parking space modification for the 35 spaces over target (see Exhibit #2) in order to provide for increased flexibility when parking Building "A". Staff has no objection to granting this parking space modification.

The Applicant is required to provide 3 large loading spaces in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-6.210 for each building. The Applicant has proposed four large loading spaces on site. In accordance with Z.O. §1-19-6.210.D the Applicant is seeking a loading space modification for an increase in the number of loading spaces on site from 3 to 4 (see Exhibit #2). The loading modification is necessary in order to maximize the flexibility of the site and provide for sufficient loading based on a prospective tenants business needs. Staff has no objection to granting this loading space modification.

5. **Bicycle Parking §1-19-6.220 (H):** The zoning ordinance requires 1 bicycle rack for every 40,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area (GFA), which requires 1 rack for this Site. The Applicant is proposing 2 racks which complies with the code requirement. The two bike racks are located on the north and south end of Building "A". The Applicant has provided a note that bicycle parking will comply with the Frederick County Bicycle Design Guide.
6. **Pedestrian Circulation and Safety §1-19-6.220 (G):** The Applicant worked with Staff during this most recent approval process and is proposing a 5' wide sidewalk along the entire length of the proposed Arcadia Drive from MD 85 to the end of the proposed cul-de-sac on Lot 4. Lot 1 will contain a stub sidewalk that will lead to Building "A", which will provide pedestrian access and circulation throughout the site.

Conditions:

1. In accordance with Z.O. §1-19-6.220.A.1 the Applicant is seeking a parking space modification for the 35 spaces over target.
2. In accordance with Z.O. §1-19-6.210.D the Applicant is seeking a loading space modification for an increase in the number of loading spaces on site from 3 to 4.
3. In accordance with Z.O. §1-19-6.220.B.2: The Applicant is seeking FCPC approval for increasing the width of the two-way drive isle from the recommended 24' to the proposed 28' for increased truck circulation and maneuverability throughout the site.

Public Utilities §1-19-3.300.4 (C): *Where the proposed development will be served by publicly owned community water and sewer, the facilities shall be adequate to serve the proposed development. Where proposed development will be served by facilities other than publicly owned community water and sewer, the facilities shall meet the requirements of and receive approval from the Maryland Department of the Environment/the Frederick County Health Department.*

Findings/Conclusions

1. **Public Water and Sewer:** The site is to be served by public water and sewer and is classified W-3, S-3. The entire site will be served by water coming from New Design WTP and Sewer flowing into the Ballenger-McKinney WWTP.

Natural features §1-19-3.300.4 (D): *Natural features of the site have been evaluated and to the greatest extent practical maintained in a natural state and incorporated into the design of the development. Evaluation factors include topography, vegetation, sensitive resources, and natural hazards.*

Findings/Conclusions

- 1. Topography:** Lot 1 is flat and sits slightly higher than MD 85. The proposed plan will not significantly alter the existing topography on site.
- 2. Vegetation:** The site was graded in 2010 subsequent to the approvals gained at that time. With the exception of the previously preserved FRO easements, the site has been cleared of any vegetation.
- 3. Sensitive Resources:** Existing mapping of the site reflects LsA type flooding and wet soils, located on-site. However, after the previous Preliminary/Final Site Plan approval the site was mass graded consistent with approvals in place at that time. The recent site plan note #7 indicates that no wetlands or 100-year floodplain are impacted by the proposed development. The site has been designed to treat all SWM for quality and quantity in accordance with the 2007 MD SWM Guidelines.
- 4. Natural Hazards:** There are no natural hazards located on site.

Common Areas §1-19-3.300.4 (E): *If the plan of development includes common areas and/or facilities, the Planning Commission as a condition of approval may review the ownership, use, and maintenance of such lands or property to ensure the preservation of such areas, property, and facilities for their intended purposes.*

Findings/Conclusions

- 1. Proposed Common Area:** The site includes industrial development and therefore, common areas requiring Planning Commission review of ownership, use, and maintenance are not proposed.

Other Applicable Regulations

Moderately Priced Dwelling Units – Chapter 1-6A: The proposed use is non-residential; therefore, MPDUs are not required.

Stormwater Management – Chapter 1-15.2: Stormwater Management has been addressed or previously approved and still valid per Improvement Plans, AP 14165.

Planned Commercial/Industrial Development Standards-§1-19-10.300: This development proposal adheres to all of the standards listed in Z.O. Section 1-19-10.300.

§1-19-10.300. (A) *Purpose and intent.* In summary, the Planned Commercial/Industrial Development process is intended to encourage a concentration of uses and limit strip development, to provide for controlled access/convenience/efficiency for users, and to allow more than 1 principal use or building on a single lot in the GC, ORI, LI and GI zoning districts where flexibility in planning can be permitted without disturbing the neighborhood. Within the Limited Industrial the Planned Commercial/Industrial development process allows the use and development of a site for multiple users that may rotate over time without the necessity of subdividing the property. It allows for efficient and full use of an existing site that is larger in size than what is needed by an individual user. Staff has worked with the Applicant to achieve the purpose and intent of the development process as it would apply to the Limited Industrial zoning district. The proposed development meets the requirements of this section.

§1-19-10.300. (C) *Design standards.* The proposed development meets the design standards of this section. The layout has been designed to provide safe and efficient arrangement of land uses facilitating vehicular access into and throughout the Site.

The proposed uses comply with applicable supplementary Industrial district regulations as well as the Industrial District Performance Standards provided in §1-19-7.600 and §1-19-7.610.

APFO – Chapter 1-20:

1. **Schools.** Schools are not required to be tested due to the commercial uses proposed.
2. **Water/Sewer.** While the public sewer and water facilities are currently adequate to serve the Project, the Applicant is aware that capacity is not guaranteed until purchased. APFO approval for sewer and water does not guarantee that plats will be recorded and building permits will be issued. Plat recordation and building permit issuance is subject to compliance with the Annotated Code of Maryland, Environment Article Section 9-512, et seq. and all applicable County regulations, including but not limited to Sec. 1-16-106 of the Frederick County Subdivision Regulations.
3. **Roads.** As previously discussed, this development has fully guaranteed road improvements and has paid into all road escrow accounts required by the APFO at preliminary subdivision plan, outlined in the project’s vested 2006 Letter of Understanding (LOU). A trip cap has been established for Lot 1; 22 AM Peak Hour trips and 17 PM Peak Hour trips.

Forest Resource – Chapter 1-21: FRO mitigation for this development (recordation of on-site forest conservation easements and payment of fee-in-lieu) was provided in 2008 under AP 6866. No further FRO mitigation is required.

Historic Preservation – Chapter 1-23: There are no Historic Resources located on this Site.

Summary of Agency Comments

Other Agency or Ordinance Requirements	Comment
Development Review Engineering (DRE):	Conditional Approval
Development Review Planning:	Hold: Address all agency comments as the plan proceeds through to completion.
State Highway Administration (SHA):	N/A
Div. of Utilities and Solid Waste Mngt. (DUSWM):	Approved
Health Dept.	N/A
Office of Life Safety	Approved
DPDR Traffic Engineering	Approved
Historic Preservation	N/A

RECOMMENDATION

Staff has no objection to conditional approval of the Planned Commercial/Industrial Development site plan approval for a 30,120 square foot office/warehouse building, on a 3.84-acre site. If the Planning Commission conditionally approves the site plan, the site plan is valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of Planning Commission approval.

Based upon the findings and conclusions as presented in the staff report the application meets or will meet all applicable zoning, APFO, and FRO requirements once the following conditions are met:

1. Address all agency comments as the plan proceeds through to completion.
2. Planning Commission approval of the following modification requests:
 - a. §1-19-6.210.D: Number of Loading Spaces from 3 to 4
 - b. §1-19-6.220.B.2: Increase drive isle width from 24' to 28'
 - c. §1-19-6.220.A.1: Increase the number of parking spaces to 35 over target
 - d. §1-19-6.500.G: Lighting spillage modification to allow spillage over the property lines interior to the overall development
3. Lighting is required to be designed and installed to be fully shielded and directed downward. Prior to site development plan final signature approval, the Applicant shall add text to Site Plan Note 9 that states that lighting shall comply with section 1-19-6.500 of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. The proposed uses comply with applicable supplementary Industrial district regulations as well as the Industrial District Performance Standards provided in § [1-19-7.600](#) and § [1-19-7.610](#), respectively.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

MOTION TO APPROVE

I move that the Planning Commission **APPROVE** Planned Commercial/Industrial Development Site Plan SP-04-11, AP 15388 **with conditions and modifications** as listed in the staff report for the proposed Planned Commercial/Industrial Development site plan approval for a 30,120 square foot office/warehouse building, on a 3.84-acre site, based on the findings and conclusions of the staff report and the testimony, exhibits, and documentary evidence produced at the public meeting.





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Revised September 1, 2015
July 9, 2015

Frederick County Planning Commission
30 North Market Street
Frederick, MD 21701

Re: Lot 1, Russell Property Modification Requests
A/P #15388

Dear Commission Members:

On behalf of our client, we are requesting several modifications from the provisions of the Frederick County Zoning Ordinance. They are:

1. Section 1-19-6.220 Parking Spaces and Aisle Dimensions: Building A on Lot 1 currently does not have tenants. It is assumed that there will be 40% warehouse use and 60% office use but the ratio of warehouse to office remains flexible. Office requires 1 space per 300 square feet while warehouse requires 1 space per 1000 square feet. Lot 1 has 35 more parking spaces than the 40/60 split of uses require. To maintain flexibility, it is requested that the number of spaces required is modified to allow more spaces in the event there is more office space than warehouse space leased in the building.
2. Section 1-19-6.210 Loading Space Requirements and Dimensions: Lot 1 Building A requires 3 loading spaces for a 40% warehouse/60% office mix. Four large loading spaces are provided. In order to maintain flexibility in the event there is more warehousing than office space occupying the building, a modification from the requirement is requested to allow the 4 large loading spaces. In the event, there is more office than warehouse occupying the building and less loading spaces are needed and more parking, a site plan will be submitted for approval.
3. Section 1-19-6.500 (D) Lighting. The Russell Property is being developed as a planned commercial industrial park with 11 buildings. Although the buildings are located on separate lots, the park is considered as a single location. Light spillage is created by shared light poles in parking areas and is not unusual. It is requested that within the boundaries of the overall subdivision, light is permitted to exceed .50 foot candles at the property lines between the Russell Property lots. Light cannot exceed .50 foot candles on the outer property lines to the planned development.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Francis Zeller".

S. Francis Zeller
Vice President

cc: Matt Holbrook

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