TITLE: Royal Farms Convenience Store
         Urbana Commons, Lot 5

FILE NUMBER: SP-99-08, AP #14159, FRO #14161/14261,
             APFO #14160, associated w/ S1133

REQUEST: Site Development Plan Approval

The Applicant is requesting Site Development Plan approval for a
convenience store with an accessory automobile filling station and
carwash on a single 1.99-acre lot.

PROJECT INFORMATION:
ADDRESS/LOCATION: Northwest quadrant of the intersection of Worthington
                  Boulevard and Fingerboard Road; adjacent to Landon House
                  site, in Urbana
TAX MAP/PARCEL: Tax Map 96, Parcel 189, Lot 5
COMP. PLAN: General Commercial (GC)
ZONING: General Commercial (GC)
PLANNING REGION: Urbana
WATER/SEWER: W-3/S-3

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVES:
APPLICANT: Fingerboard Properties, LLC/Royal Farms, Inc.
OWNER: Fingerboard Properties, LLC
ENGINEER/PLANNER: Fox & Associates, Inc.

STAFF: Denis Superczynski

RECOMMENDATION: Conditional Approval

ATTACHMENTS:
Exhibit 1 - Site Plan Rendering
Exhibit 2 - Building Elevations
Exhibit 3 - Parking, Lighting, and
Landscaping Modification Request
The Applicant is requesting Site Development Plan Approval for a convenience store (5,259 s.f.), with an accessory fueling station (6 pump islands), and carwash, to be constructed on a single, 1.93-acre commercial lot (Lot 5) in the Urbana Commons subdivision. The proposed use is being reviewed as a “convenience store” under the heading of Commercial Uses – Retail, per Section 19-5.310 (Use Table) in the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed use is a principal permitted use in the General Commercial Zoning District subject to site development plan approval. The proposed buildings will face Fingerboard Road (MD 80) along the parcel’s southern boundary, though vehicular access will be provided via a private internal private right-of-way – Welmar Drive – which is planned to serve as a connection between Fingerboard Road at its southern terminus and Worthington Boulevard at its northern terminus. Other sites that will be served by this new internal drive include the existing Frederick Memorial Hospital medical center on Worthington Boulevard (Lot 4 of Urbana Commons), future commercial/retail uses on Lots 1, 2, and 3, and the Landon House complex on the adjacent Parcel 38 along the western boundary of the subject site.

All proposed uses will occur in new structures since the existing parcel is now vacant, rough-graded, undeveloped land.

Lots 1, 2, and 3 are shown on the Site Development Plan for illustrative purposes only and may not proceed in the development process until such time as a Site Development Plan for those planned uses is approved by the Planning Commission.
BACKGROUND

Development History

The Urbana Commons development (of which Lot 5 is a part) received Preliminary Subdivision Plan approval and Conceptual Site Plan approval for four commercial lots in 2006. Two restaurants, a commercial structure, and a medical office building were originally proposed for this site. Final Plat approval and Final Site Plan approval was granted only for the FMH medical office on Lot 4 (SP-99-08, now existing) in 2007. No additional activity progressed on the site after construction of the medical building in the late 2000’s.

However, the general arrangement of development on the Urbana Commons site has remained essentially unchanged since 2006. The recent coordination of access to create a planned internal private right-of-way – Welmar Drive – by the owners of the Urbana Commons site and the Landon House site has resulted in a slightly reconfigured lot layout through an addition plat. The re-working of the internal circulation maximizes usable acreage on both the Urbana Commons and Landon House sites.

The Urbana Commons site was subject to an APFO LOU dated February 2, 2008, all requirements of which have been satisfied. A limitation on the proposed intensity of uses on the Subject site is maintained via vehicular peak hour trip caps of 282 (am) and 257 (pm).

This parcel was rezoned in 2010 as part of the Countywide Comprehensive Plan update process. The parcel had previously been zoned Village Center (VC).

Substantial improvements to the regional infrastructure serving this GC site have been completed in conjunction with the development of the adjoining Villages of Urbana PUD, the Urbana ORC MXD, and surrounding commercial retail development south and southeast of this site. The proposed internal driveway will tie into the regional arterial roadway system which has been, and will continue to be, improved as a result of local development activity. Pedestrian access to, from, and across this site will likely be frequent given its location in the midst of several existing and planned commercial and residential developments. This Site Development Plan, as well as the Urbana Commons Preliminary Subdivision Plan (AP 14156), accommodate and advance these neighborhood connections.

This Site Development Plan is being considered concurrently with the aforementioned Preliminary Subdivision Plan, an Addition Plat (to accommodate a reconfigured boundary line across which the private shared internal private right-of-way will be constructed), and associated FRO, APFO and SWM applications.

Existing Site Characteristics

The site is vacant and rough-graded for development as a result of the relocation of MD 355 (Worthington Blvd) in the previous decade, and generally triangular in shape with its western edge defined by the boundary with the Landon House property. The confluence of Worthington Boulevard and Fingerboard Road forms the ‘point’ of the triangle and results in a highly visible commercial site in this emerging neighborhood. The Urbana Commons site slopes gently downward toward the east with a drop off of approximately 35 feet across the length of the parcel. Proposed finish grading would create two terraces – the first being the site of the proposed Royal Farms, and the second occupied by the remaining planned commercial users (Lots 1, 2, and 3) along Worthington Boulevard.

Surrounding land uses present a mix of old and new Urbana. Directly across Fingerboard Road (MD 80) from the subject parcel is the site of the former Cracked Claw Restaurant/Peter Pan Inn – now planned for commercial/retail pad site development including a new CVS Pharmacy (constructed in...
2013), an auto parts store, a bank, and a convenience store/gas station. The Landon House, a pre-Civil War structure that is currently undergoing extensive renovations and is being adapted for use as offices, a restaurant and events facility, is located on the adjacent Parcel 38 west of the Royal Farms site. Neighboring land uses east of the site (east side of Worthington Blvd) include a mix of retail, restaurant, and neighborhood convenience uses. An FMH medical office resides on Lot 4 of the Urbana Commons development, to the north of the Subject site. Residential uses are planned or constructed on the north side of Worthington Boulevard, across the road from the Urbana Commons property. The former Dixon-Dudderer site, located approximately 500 feet south of the Royal Farms site and within easy walking distance of the proposed convenience store, was approved in August 2013 for a 352-dwelling unit, mixed use (residential and commercial) project called Urban Green (SP-12-11).

The portion of Worthington Boulevard that passes along the northern frontage of the Urbana Commons site is constructed as the relocated MD 355 and will likely carry that state highway designation within five years.

Generally, the proposed site has been prepared for development with the entrance/egress drives onto both Worthington Blvd and Fingerboard Road already completed and a generally level and stabilized grade established on this site.
ANALYSIS

Summary of Development Standards, Findings, and Conclusions

The site of this proposed Royal Farms convenience store and filling station is located in the General Commercial, GC zoning district and must comply with the general Site Plan Review criteria (Section 1-19-3.300.4).

Key issues related to the proposed Site Plan include:
- Building orientation, massing, and general architectural design
- Establishment of a street façade that addresses Fingerboard Road
- Maximizing the efficiency and clarity of the internal circulation on the site
- Seeking an appropriate compromise between drive aisle width and parking space depth
- Managing multiple auto-oriented uses on a high traffic parcel while maintaining a safe and convenient pedestrian environment
- Managing driveway access from this site onto the public street network
- Seeking safe pedestrian access across the site
- Encouraging a functional and coordinated approach to signage on the site
- Accommodating to the extent practical, the site layout constrictions due to location of underground utilities

Staff worked with the Applicant extensively over the course of many months to refine the Site Development Plan for this project and provide for an adequately functional project that includes a high density of uses on an oddly-shaped site. As currently planned, this site plan layout will permit for additional uses to be developed on adjacent lots with minimal disruption in the general flow of users to the convenience store or medical office building. As this current plan proceeds into construction and regular use, there may be future indicators of how to best utilize and design the remaining portion of the property in a way that further minimizes internal site conflicts.

Detailed Analysis of Findings and Conclusions

Site Development Plan Approval shall be based upon the criteria found in Section 1-19-3.300.4 Site Plan Review Approval Criteria of the Frederick County Zoning Ordinance.

Site Development, Section 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.

Findings/Conclusions

1. Dimensional Requirements/Bulk Standards, Section 1-19-6.100: In the General Commercial Zoning District, setback requirements, lot dimension requirements, and maximum height limitations for the proposed uses defer to Section 1-19-6.100 (Design Requirements For Specific Districts). In the GC District, the required front yard for commercial uses is 25 feet; the side yard is 8 feet; and, rear yard is 25 feet. These standards are satisfied in this proposed Site Plan. The tallest building planned for the site, the Convenience store structure at a proposed height of 25’, will not exceed the maximum height standard of 60 feet.
The design of the proposed store allows for two public entrances, on the front (facing Fingerboard Road), and on the rear (facing north toward Worthington Boulevard). The underground utilities (including public sewer) severely limited placement of the store and required the placement of the fueling pumps canopy between the store façade and the Fingerboard Road frontage. However, the rear entrance allows for pedestrian access from users approaching from the north as well as those frequenting the store for vehicular service needs (gasoline, carwash) who would likely utilize the southern store entrance.

The carwash, an accessory use to the convenience store, is planned as a separate structure with its own queuing aisle segregated from the drive aisle serving the remainder of the lot.

The minimum lot area required in the GC District is 12,000 s.f. and is far exceeded by this project. Required lot width is established at 100 feet and is exceeded as well by this proposal. Staff finds the proposed setback and height dimensions to be consistent with those permitted in the Zoning Ordinance.

| Minimum Front yard setback (GC): | 25 ft |
| Proposed Front yard setback: | 60+ ft (to fueling canopy) |
| Minimum Side yard setback (GC): | 8 ft |
| Proposed Front yard setback: | 25+ ft |
| Minimum Rear yard setback (GC): | 25 ft |
| Proposed Rear yard setback: | 60+ ft |
| Maximum Building Height (GC): | 60 ft. |
| Proposed Building Height: | 25 ft. |

2. **Signage, Section 1-19-6.300**: Signage proposed must comply with Zoning Ordinance Sections 1-19-6.300 through 1-19-6.340. The proposed signage plan identifies and distributes site signage based upon the following calculation provided by Staff:

- **Maximum Signage Area Permitted**: 155 sq. ft.
- **Signage Area identified on Site plan**: 150.7 sq. ft.

Calculated 10 x Square Root of the Total Building Frontage:

Based on two primary access frontages 106'-8" + 106'-8" + 28'-0" = 241'-4". The car wash structure - *front entry side only* - is included in this calculation (28 feet) as the primary access to the car wash facility since the structure, if attached to the main building, would have been included in the calculation of the public access frontage)

One Sign Board Pylon Sign is permitted along MD 80 frontage as shown. The fuel pricing pylon sign is limited to 12 feet in height. The identification/branding area of this pylon sign (Royal Farms lettering/logo) shall count against the total of 155 sf.

All channelized letter signage areas may be calculated in the following manner:

- the total area of signage shall be the total of the area enclosed by each individual letter or symbol, excluding the background field.
The signage plan submitted as part of the Site Development Plan demonstrates that the Applicant will meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for signs in the GC Zoning District for the proposed use (Commercial) per Section 1-19-6.320(7).

3. **Landscaping, Section 1-19-6.400:** The Applicant has submitted a landscape plan in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-6.400. Landscaped screening of parking areas is generally sufficient as shown. However, an additional number of screening shrubs should be planted along the front of the parking bay facing Fingerboard Road in order to accomplish a continuous visual screen. Given the south-facing orientation of this frontage, the shade created by the proposed street trees will be unlikely to diminish the growth of the vegetative screen. Section 1-19-6.400(C) requires that the plantings be capable of providing a minimum 30-inch high vegetative screen at the time of planting. The planting table (Plant List) provided on Sheet 3 indicates that the Inkberry may not meet this initial requirement.

   The Applicant is seeking relief from the requirement to plant one street tree per 35 feet of road frontage, as requested in the landscaping modification request submitted as Exhibit 3. A total of nine (9) street trees is required in the Ordinance and the Applicant is instead proposing to plant four (4) Forest Pansy Redbud (Eastern Redbud) trees. While Staff would prefer to see additional trees along this frontage – perhaps an additional planting to reduce the spacing to 65 feet between trees rather than the 80 feet between trees as proposed – it would also be advantageous to the Applicant to propose an alternative species to the Redbud for use as street trees along the primary frontage of the store. The Redbud will likely reach a mature height of between 20 and 30 feet depending on local site conditions. This height limitation coupled with the natural growth habit of this variety would likely serve to obscure the view of signage and branding occurring on the site. The Applicant should consider planting a more appropriate street tree variety that will not branch out within the site lines of vehicles and pedestrians using Fingerboard Road.

4. **Lighting, Section 1-19-6.500:** The Applicant has provided a lighting plan in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-6.500. Multiple pole-mounted lamps are provided on site as shown on the lighting plan. The plan meets the standards in the Zoning Ordinance with the exception of the 19 foot tall pole-mounted lights. The Applicant is requesting a modification of the 18 foot maximum height for commercial uses as provided in Section 1-19-6.500(G) submitted as Exhibit 3.

   **Conditions:** The Applicant is seeking a modification of the lighting pole height requirement to permit a 19 ft. tall pole light height. The Applicant has not provided a justification for this modification but Staff has no objection to this minor change.

   Staff recommends that the Planning Commission require one additional street tree along the Fingerboard Road frontage and Staff suggests to the Applicant that an alternative species to the Redbud be substituted in the Planting Table in order to maintain commercial visibility to the store and meet the intent of the street tree requirements along this roadway.

*Transportation and Parking, Section 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 proposes to utilize the shared Welmar Drive for access to both MD 355 (Worthington Boulevard) and MD 80 (Fingerboard Road). A connecting internal circulation loop (Hawks Tail Lane) that will be constructed at the time of development of Lots 1-3 will provide additional access/egress options for those visiting the Royal Farms site based on direction of approach and ultimate destination (e.g., food, gas, carwash). Staff and the applicant evaluated various layouts to ensure that the access and circulation pattern minimizes conflict and aids traffic flow to and within the site, including access to adjacent lots. All drive aisles are sufficiently wide to provide for emergency vehicle access as well as tanker truck access for the filling of the underground fuel tanks on the Royal Farms site.

2. **Connectivity, Section 1-19-6.220 (F)**: The Site, as planned, will be well connected to the local road network as well as to adjacent development. The shared internal access drive is located so as to provide maximum benefit to multiple existing and planned uses as well as to serve as a convenient local pedestrian and vehicular connection to nearby adjoining sites in the neighborhood. The use of the Welmar Drive private right-of-way provides for maximum connectivity within the site while minimizing the number of direct access points onto the adjacent public roadways.

3. **Public Transit**: This site is not directly served by any current County or regional transit service. The I-270 Transitway, identified in the County’s Comprehensive Plan as a transit corridor following the right-of-way along Worthington Boulevard, would be located just to the northeast of this site. A 44-foot wide transitway reservation is provided on the Preliminary Subdivision Plan (across proposed Lots 1-3) but does not directly affect Lot 5.

4. **Vehicle Parking and Loading, Section 1-19-6.200 through 1-19-6.220**: Pursuant to Section 1-19-6.220 of the Zoning Ordinance, parking space requirements for the proposed land use are as follows:

   **Convenience Store/Fueling Station**
   Required: 18 spaces (1 space per 300 sf of floor area excluding storage)
   Provided: 55 spaces
   Loading Space: 1 small space required; 1 small space provided (3,599 sf of net floor area)

   The Applicant must request a modification under Section 1-19-6.220(A)(1) to allow for 37 additional parking spaces on this site. While Staff generally seeks to limit the number of vehicle parking spaces on development sites, the proposed number is not inconsistent with other convenience store/fueling stations. The automated carwash would also likely contribute to the need for one or two additional spaces above the required 18 spaces to accommodate those vehicles parked for drying, vacuuming, detailing of their vehicles.

   Shared parking opportunities may be available due to the general configuration of the individual uses and structures on adjoining lots allowing for some flexibility during times of unusually high demand for vehicle parking at any given building in the development. An additional 10 parking spaces are identified (east side of Welmar Drive) which would likely serve as shared spaces for this use and others within the Urbana Commons development.
5. **Bicycle Parking:** The Zoning Ordinance requires bicycle parking to be provided for buildings 5,000 s.f. in size or greater. Each commercial use requires the provision of one bicycle rack per 20 vehicle parking spaces. Each rack must accommodate two parked bicycles. The bike racks are generally located in well-illuminated, hard-surfaced areas within close proximity to front entrances. Royal Farms is proposing two racks (4 bike spaces), a number that exceeds the County requirement normally applied based on the required 18 vehicle parking spaces. While the Applicant is requesting a parking modification to permit 55 parking spaces, Staff finds the number and placement of bike racks to be sufficient for this proposed use.

6. **Pedestrian Circulation and Safety, Section 1-19-6.220:** Pedestrian access to and from the site is accommodated primarily via the sidewalk connections emanating from the southern (along Fingerboard Road) and northern (Worthington Blvd) edges of the site and connecting to commercial lots 1-3 within the Urbana Commons development through an internal pathway system. The Applicant has provided for pedestrian movement from the vicinity of the FMH site to the convenience store as well as accommodating movement between Lot 5 on the upper terrace, and Lots 1-3 on the lower terrace via a stairway located north of the carwash. The automobile orientation of the fueling station and carwash tends to favor a circulation pattern more responsive to the vehicle, but the Applicant has provided ample opportunities for safe pedestrian access from nearly all directions leading into the site.

**Conditions:** The Applicant has included a request for modification of the parking space requirement to permit a total of 55 vehicle spaces attached as Exhibit 3.

**Public Utilities, Section 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.

**Findings/Conclusions**

1. **Public Water and Sewer Service:** The site is to be served by public water and sewer and is classified W-3/S-3. While the public sewer and water facilities are currently adequate to serve the proposed use, the Applicant acknowledges that capacity is not guaranteed until purchased.

**Natural Features, Section 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 5 generally consists of a construction-ready, fully stabilized site within a designated Community Growth Area. The proposed Site Plan will maintain the general grade of the existing lot.

2. **Vegetation:** The Applicant is proposing an alternate landscape plan in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-6.400. The site is no longer in its pre-development vegetative state. The proposed landscape plan, while not providing the full canopy cover or street tree
planting typically required of commercial development, does generally provide for an attractively planted site that will improve the local environment of the immediate neighborhood.

3. **Natural Hazards:** Based on available mapping, no wetlands, flooding soils, or FEMA floodplain are located on the site.

The proposed development of this site will likely enhance the existing condition through the planting of alternative street trees as well as other vegetation and ground cover.

*Common Areas, Section 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 area, property, and facilities for their intended purposes.*

**Findings/Conclusions**

1. **Proposed Common Area:** No common areas are proposed as part of this Site Plan. The shared private internal driveway will be subject to a private agreement between the owners and users of the proposed Urbana Commons and Landon House developments. The provision of necessary maintenance and care of this internal driveway, as well as other shared infrastructure on the site, will be specified in private agreements.

**Other Applicable Regulations**

*Stormwater Management – Chapter 1-15.2:* Storm water management (SWM) shall be designed in accordance with the 2009 Maryland Storm Water Design Manual, including all revisions and all supplements. SWM concept/development plans must be submitted and reviewed by staff. A final SWM plan must be provided as part of the Improvement Plans submittal.

*APFO – Chapter 1-20:*

1. **Schools** – Schools are not impacted because the proposed development is a non-residential use.

2. **Water/Sewer** – The site is to be served by public water and sewer and is classified W-3/S-3. While the public sewer and water facilities are currently adequate to serve the proposed use, the Applicant acknowledges that capacity is not guaranteed until purchased.

3. **Roads** – This application has been previously approved for APFO compliance. The site is subject to the terms of an APFO Letter of Understanding (LOU) between the Applicant and the FCPC dated February 6, 2008, which will remain valid until August 9, 2015. All requirements of the LOU have been satisfied. Weekday peak hour trips are capped at 282(am) and 257(pm). [see AP 3361]

*Forest Resource Ordinance (FRO) – Chapter 1-21:* This development is subject to an approved FRO plan from 2005 (AP 1357). The site does not contain forest. However, the Applicant requested a modification of the Forest Resource Ordinance (AP 14261) to permit the removal of one
non-hazardous specimen tree – the 33” dia. hackberry on adjoining Parcel 38 as part of the Preliminary Plan for Urbana Commons (AP 14156). The Applicant plans to remove the non-hazardous tree in order to construct the shared internal private right-of-way (Welmar Drive) connecting Worthington Boulevard and Fingerboard Road. As a result, FRO approval is contingent upon the modification request in front of the Planning Commission as part of the review of the Preliminary Subdivision Plan application for this site (AP 14156/FRO 14261).

Historic Preservation – Chapter 1-23: The Stancioff Property (aka, Landon House), a National Register listed property, is located on the adjacent parcel, west of the subject site. No adverse impacts to the historic property are anticipated as a result of this development proposal.

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<td><strong>Development Review Engineering (DRE):</strong></td>
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<td>Hold: Address all agency comments as the plan proceeds through to completion.</td>
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<td><strong>State Highway Administration (SHA):</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Historic Preservation</strong></td>
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RECOMMENDATION

Staff has no objection to Conditional Approval of the Site Development Plan subject to the conditions and modifications noted below. If the Planning Commission conditionally approves the Site Plan, the plan is valid for the remaining validity period of the APFO LOU, or August 9, 2015.

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. The total overall signage allotment for Lot 5 shall be set at 155 s.f. and shall not include the pricing board on the pole-mounted sign situated along the Fingerboard Road frontage of this site.

3. The Applicant shall provide one (1) additional street tree along the Fingerboard Road frontage to reduce the average spacing between specimens to 65 feet. Additionally, it is recommended that the Applicant identify a suitable replacement street tree species for the proposed Forest Pansy Redbud trees.

4. Planning Commission approval of the requested modification of the parking requirements to allow 55 parking spaces instead of the required 18 (37 more spaces than required by the Zoning Ordinance).

5. Planning Commission approval of the alternate landscaping plan to allow a reduction in parking area tree canopy as shown on the Landscape Plan, and a reduction in the number of street trees along the Fingerboard Road frontage from the required 9 trees to 5 trees. These five (5) trees shall consist of species identified in the *List of Native Overstory Trees in Frederick County*.

6. Planning Commission approval of the requested modification of the lighting pole height limit to allow 19 foot tall pole-mounted lights on the site.

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**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

**MOTION TO APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

I move that the Planning Commission *APPROVE* Site plan SP-99-08 (AP #14159, FRO 14161/14261, APFO 14160) with conditions and modifications as listed in the staff report for the proposed Royal Farms-Urbana Commons (Lot 5), based on the findings and conclusions of the staff report and the testimony, exhibits, and documentary evidence produced at the public meeting.
FOX & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
SUITE G  
82 WORMAN'S MILL COURT  
FREDERICK, MARYLAND 21701  
PHONE: (301) 895-0860 • FAX: (301) 293-6009  
E-MAIL: foxfred@foxassociatesinc.com  

January 2, 2014

Frederick County Division of Permitting and Development Review  
Office of Development Review  
30 North Market Street, 3rd floor  
Frederick, Maryland  21701

Attn:  Denis Superczynski  
Principal Planner

Re: Royal Farms Convenience Store Site Plan  
Landscape Justification  
County A/P # 14159  
Fox Project # 12-30930

Dear Denis:

The Site Plan for the Royal Farms convenience store and gasoline dispensing pumps on Fingerboard Road in Urbana is being submitted for county review. This letter is provided to address the justification for the parking area landscaping requirements and the street tree requirements on the site.

Parking Area Landscaping Requirements:
Section 1-19-6.400(D)(2) reviews parking area tree canopy coverage requirements as follows: “Parking area trees shall be predominantly deciduous and provide at least 20% canopy cover at maturity.” Royal Farms Site Development Guidelines and Civil Specifications requests that as much of the landscaping as possible be located around the perimeter of the site and out of the parking field. There are several reasons for the landscaping guidelines. Deciduous trees within the parking field create problems for store patrons such as leaf litter, and bird droppings on parked cars. Trees within the parking area will restrict the sight distance for transport trailer trucks accessing the site. The Royal Farms Landscape Plan shows parking area landscaping on two interior islands on the east side of the store, one island on the front parking bay, and numerous islands at the end of parking bays. These areas are planted with small deciduous trees such as Serviceberry and Flowering Cherry in order to landscape the parking area while avoiding the problems associated with large trees. The plan shows landscape shrubs located around the perimeter of the parking area where they will be effective as low level screening of parking areas. For these reasons, we request approval of the parking area landscaping as shown on the Site Plan.

Street Tree Landscaping Requirements:
Section 1-19-6.400(A) of the Zoning Ordinance reviews street tree requirements. One tree shall be provided per 35 feet of roadway frontage. An alternate on-site location may be approved by the Planning Commission. Eight street trees are required along the Fingerboard Road frontage of the site. Royal Farms requests to provide four trees along the frontage and to provide the remaining four trees elsewhere on the site. Providing trees every 35 ft. on the frontage would block visibility of the convenience store from Fingerboard Road, which is very important for customer recognition and access. The remaining four trees can be utilized to increase screening from adjacent properties. Two Snowgoose Flowering Cherry trees have been added along the east property line, and two Trident Maple trees have been added on the north property corner to buffer adjacent properties.
For these reasons, we request approval of the trees as shown on the Site Plan. Please contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely,
Fox & Associates, Inc.

Ross Lillard, R.L.A.
January 2, 2014

Frederick County Division of Permitting and Development Review
Office of Development Review
30 North Market Street, 3rd floor
Frederick, Maryland 21701
Attn: Denis Superczynski
Principal Planner

Re: Royal Farms Convenience Store Site Plan
Parking Justification
County A/P # 14159
Fox Project # 12-30930

Dear Denis:

The Site Plan for the Royal Farms convenience store and gasoline dispensing pumps on Fingerboard Road in Urbana is being submitted for county review. This letter is provided to address the justification for the number of parking spaces to exceed the maximum allowed in the district.

Section 1-19-6.220(A) of the zoning ordinance, table for parking space requirements in the Commercial Uses-Retail category, all other types of uses permitted in any commercial district require 1 parking space for each 300 sq. ft. of floor area. Under the Site Data on Sheet 1 of the Site Plan, the parking computation shows the Royal Farms store will have 5,259 sq. ft. of floor area divided by 300 sq. ft. per space, which will require a total of 18 parking spaces.

Royal Farms has been operating many stores in the mid-Atlantic region for many years. Based on this experience, they are very familiar with their site parking needs to provide a convenience store that meets their customer’s demands. For this store location they are requesting the approval of the 55 parking spaces shown on the site plan. This is the typical parking space quantity for this size store. Royal Farms has found they need this amount of parking in order to meet customer needs particularly during commuter time periods when their on-site visits increase. Site visits to Royal Farms stores are typically brief, in the 5 to 15 minute range, and customers need adequate parking spaces for their quick stops on the way to work. The additional parking provides flexibility for parking space options to prevent backups and delays that would impede on-site traffic.

For these reasons, we request approval of 55 parking spaces on site for this Site Plan application. Please contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely,
Fox & Associates, Inc.

Ross Lillard, R.L.A.
FOX & ASSOCIATES, INC.
SUITE G
82 WORMAN'S MILL COURT
FREDERICK, MARYLAND 21701
PHONE: (301) 695-0880 • FAX: (301) 293-6609
E-MAIL: foxfrederick@foxassociatesinc.com

January 2, 2014

Frederick County Division of Permitting and Development Review
Office of Development Review
30 North Market Street, 3rd floor
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Attn: Denis Superzynski
Principal Planner

Re: Royal Farms Convenience Store Site Plan
Light Height Justification
County A/P # 14159
Fox Project # 12-30930

Dear Denis:

The Site Plan for the Royal Farms convenience store and gasoline dispensing pumps on Fingerboard Road in Urbana is being submitted for county review. This letter is provided to address the justification for the pole light height.

Frederick County Zoning Ordinance Section 1-19-6.500(B)(2) addresses lighting height for commercial uses to be 18 ft. The pole light heights shown on the lighting detail plan are 19 ft. from the ground to the point of illumination. The additional one foot of light height above 18 ft. is requested for this site which is a commercial site that is surrounded by other commercial properties. The 19 ft. light height is the standard typically used on Royal Farms convenience stores. This height has been demonstrated at their locations to give good ground level coverage of the light needed for safe use of the store and parking area. Royal Farms stores have many customers accessing the site in the pre-dawn and after dark commuter hours, and they need adequate light for the safety of their customers. The new light poles will have energy efficient LED light fixtures.

For these reasons we request approval of the 19 ft. light height for the Royal Farms site. Please contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely,
Fox & Associates, Inc.

Ross Lillard, R.L.A.