



Summary of Actions
Riverdale Park Mixed-Use Town Center Local Design Review Committee
April 4, 2018

APPROVED NOVEMBER 7, 2018

The Riverdale Park Mixed-Use Town Center (RP M-U-TC) Local Design Review Committee held its April hearing on April 4, 2018 in the Riverdale Park Town Hall, Town Council Chambers, 5008 Queensbury Road, Riverdale Park, MD 20737.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 8:19 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Chair Alan K. Thompson, Melissa Anderson, Jeffrey Yorke

Marsha Dixon (*via telephone*)

Committee Members Absent: Michael Arnold

Staff Present: **Town of Riverdale Park**
Jonathan Greene, Neighborhood Improvement Specialist

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Thompson asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion: Ms. Anderson moved to approve the agenda with the removal of items C (Approval of Minutes of March 3, 2018) and E (Administrative Business).

Second: Mr. Yorke seconded the motion.

The motion passed in a vote of 3-0-1 (Chair Thompson abstaining).

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2011-04, DSP-13009-12 Cafritz Property (Riverdale Park Station) 6611 Baltimore Avenue –Larry Taub– Revisions to Building 5 parking garage.

Committee: Chair Thompson asked the applicant if he should send a message to [the M-NCPPC case reviewer] Ms. Susan Lareuse asking if the amendment would be approved at planning director level.

Applicant: Mr. Lawrence Taub of O'Malley, Miles, Nylan and Gilmore presented the DSP amendment. He indicated the purpose of the amendment was to re-establish the top two levels of parking that were removed under DSP-13009-11 and included some architectural changes. Responding to the chair's question, he indicated the amendment was a minor change that would be approved at planning director level, and that since it had been accepted by M-NCPPC the previous day, the committee could take a formal position. He asked that the committee review the application, vote to approve, and pass that information on to planning staff.

[Administrative note: DSP-13009-12 was accepted by M-NCPPC April 3, 2018. Per the case record, the amendment "was approved on May 30, 2018 by the Development Review Division as designee of the Planning Director in accordance with Subtitle 27, Part 3, Division 9 of the Prince George's County Code."]

Applicant: Mr. Mark Regulinski of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill asked if the amendment would be referred to the Riverdale Park Town Council. Mr. Taub stated that he hoped the town manager would affirm the MUTC Committee's expected approval.

Committee: Chair Thompson stated he believed DSP-13009-11 was a little bit odd.

Applicant: Mr. Taub stated he thought that was because of the transition and said he would send sample recommendations from previous approvals to Mr. John Lestitian, Town Manager, and copy Mayor Alan K. Thompson.

Committee: Chair Thompson spoke to Mr. Regulinski and Mr. Taub about the "ten-day review" required by the current M-NCPPC liaison. Mr. Taub acknowledged the requirement.

Applicant: Mr. Russell Zung of Mushinsky Voelzke Associates (MV+A Architects) explained they wanted to add two parking layers with a new façade, adding 279 parking spaces for a total of 752. He noted that 86% of parking for the development is in structured parking, and that everything else has stayed the same except for adding floors and changing the façade.

Committee: Ms. Dixon stated she was curious about the minor architectural revisions: since she cannot see them over the telephone, could the applicant explain verbally what changes were made [since the pre-application conference at the March 7, 2018 hearing]?

Applicant: Mr. Regulinski stated that he brought drawings showing what the garage would look like with the two floors reinstated, and it is the same as what was presented to the committee at the March hearing.

Committee: Ms. Dixon stated she recalled that the committee's belief was that the reinstatement of the two levels with an exterior of precast concrete, rather than brick, represented an erosion of the quality and appearance of this aspect of the project. She asked why the design can't be the same as what was proposed originally.

Applicant: Mr. Zung replied that they can't deconstruct what is already built with the window opening stretched to full height. Because four floors have already been constructed, they need to create a cap. This proposal matches that of Gold's Gym, a tripartite design with a cap and brick.

Committee: Mr. Yorke asked if the constructability was about the basement.

Applicant: Mr. Zung stated that it was because of bands and supports that have already been constructed.

Committee: Mr. Yorke asked if trucks would be visible on the top level in this new scheme.

Applicant: Mr. Zung stated that the lights are 60 feet back from the street. They come in at ground level.

Committee: Mr. Yorke asked what happens on the east side.

Applicant: Mr. Zung answered that it is clad, and unchanged from the previous scheme.

Committee: Ms. Anderson asked if there have been any changes since March?

Applicant: Mr. Zung answered no, except for the planning numbers.

Committee: Ms. Anderson asked if the upper windows could be screened.

Applicant: Mr. Zung replied that it was doable, if the committee doesn't like it as presented they can add screens. Mr. Regulinski gave his word that they would add screens if the committee asks.

Committee: Mr. Yorke noted that the committee could have saved the applicant a lot of money by denying the request to remove the floors last year. Chair Thompson asked the applicant when they met with Ms. Lareuse yesterday if she had reviewed all the architectural standards.

Applicant: Mr. Taub stated that he thought that she had, he was not sure, but when they submitted the amendment originally, she had required certain changes to the plan sets.

Committee: Ms. Dixon stated that she was concerned about the lack of quality in the proposed changes and asked if the project was maintaining the same quality and standards as when it was originally approved. Chair Thompson drew everyone's attention to page 10, Standard 11 of the Cafritz Property Development Plan, which requires that "structured parking facing a public street shall be considered a building (conforming to applicable standards) and be designed to visually screen cars."

The hearing broke for a recess, then reconvened.

A general discussion ensued where it was noted that Denizen's Brewing Co. had signed a lease to open in Riverdale Park Station.

Committee: Ms. Dixon reiterated her concerns about the loss of quality.

Applicant: Mr. Regulinski stated that the success of the [overall] development is due to its high quality. The development team believes this amendment proposes changes that are of the same quality. With this amendment they are seeking to address two issues: adding floors with new design that is compatible with what is already built because they cannot return to the old one. They are seeking to establish a base, middle, and top, emphasize the top (more than it was previously) with a limestone-like texture. He reiterated that the new construction would be the same quality as the other parts of the development, and that it was in their own self-interest to continue that. He stated that although there were initial concerns the quality could not be supported by the required rents, it has worked so far [i.e., tenants are paying for quality].

Committee: Ms. Dixon asked if they have had luck in getting tenants. She stated that the Planning Board was not looking to make sure that this development was "nice," only that it met the standards. She recalled the [initial] parking scheme may not have been enough; that the amount *just* met the standards.

Applicant: Mr. Regulinski replied that he dares to say everything out there exceeds what Jemal has done and requested that it be acknowledged that it is a pretty nice development and that [the development team] is acting in its own self interest to attract renters because of the quality.

Committee: Ms. Anderson stated that she believed some aesthetic standards [represent] personal preference and it should be understood it is difficult to legislate design.

Applicant: Mr. Zung stated that he believes adding brick on the top at this point would not work [aesthetically]. He stated he believes that shortening it, making it a tripartite design, and the lack of brick has made it better overall and fit in better with the rest of the development.

Committee: Mr. Yorke stated the committee should embrace Mr. Regulinski's offer to add screens if it was thought to be better that way.

Applicant: Mr. Taub stated that was a voluntary proffer, not an official offer.

A discussion ensued about whether Ms. Lareuse had fully reviewed the standards.

Motion: Mr. Yorke moved to recommend approval of DSP-13009-12, subject to verification that [M-NCPPC] planning staff have verified compliance with all mandatory standards in the development plan.

Second: Ms. Anderson seconded the motion. Ms. Dixon stated she believed no discussion was needed at this point.

The motion passed in a vote of 3-0-1 (Chair Thompson abstaining).

D. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business.

Motion: Ms. Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting.

Second: Mr. Yorke seconded the motion.

The motion passed 3-0-1 (Chair Thompson abstaining) and the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Transcribed by Alan K. Thompson

Formatted and submitted by Daniel Sams, M-NCPPC Staff Liaison