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March 5, 2021

Planning & Development Services
Received
March 8, 2021

Via Email (pds@rockvillemd.gov)
Mr. James Wasilak
Chief of Zoning, City of Rockville
111 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Re: Application for Pre-Application Meeting (“PAM”) for Redevelopment of 1800 and 1818 Chapman Avenue, and a portion of 1700 Chapman Avenue, City of Rockville (the “Property”)

Dear Mr. Wasilak:

On behalf of Hines (the “Applicant”), please find enclosed an application (the “Application”) for a Pre-Application Meeting and the associated submittal requirements for the Property, submitted pursuant to Sections 25.07.07.1 (for Project Plans) and 25.07.05.1 (for Level 2 Site Plans) of the City of Rockville (the “City”) Zoning Ordinance (the “Zoning Ordinance”). As described in further detail below, given the limited scope of the proposed Project Plan in this case, the Project Plan and Level 2 Site Plan are being submitted for concurrent review. This cover letter incorporates the information required by the PAM Application form for “Project Description and Scope of Work Narrative”.

The Applicant proposes to assemble 1800 and 1818 Chapman Avenue and a portion of the 1700 Chapman Avenue parcel owned by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (“WMATA”) in order to construct an approximately 440-unit multifamily residential project with approximately 5,870 square feet of ground floor retail (the “Project”). Currently, Hines is the contract purchaser of the 1800 and 1818 Chapman Avenue parcels (collectively, “1800 Chapman”), comprised of approximately 49,178 square feet. 1800 Chapman is located immediately adjacent to the 1700 Chapman Avenue WMATA-owned site (“1700 Chapman”), which serves the Twinbrook Metro Station. An approximately 61,786 square-foot portion of 1700 Chapman is situated between 1800 Chapman and the WMATA tracks (the “WMATA Redevelopment Site”). The WMATA Redevelopment Site is bound by 1800 Chapman to the west, the WMATA tracks to the east, the remainder of 1700 Chapman to the north (with the immediately adjacent use being the existing bus loop), and Thompson Avenue to the south, and is currently improved with a stormwater management (“SWM”) pond serving WMATA property.

The Applicant is partnering with WMATA on this joint redevelopment effort in order to accomplish three goals:

- (1) Replace the existing SWM pond currently located on the WMATA Redevelopment Site with an on-site SWM vault.



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- (2) Design and construct a perimeter bus loop for passenger pick-ups and drop-offs on the east side of the WMATA Redevelopment Site. The new bus bays will be located on the current bus loop just to the north of the Property.
- (3) Develop the Project on 1800 Chapman and the western portion of the WMATA Redevelopment Site, which will transform the four parcels currently comprising the 1800 Chapman assemblage – whose current uses are an aging and currently vacant one-story brick building and an auto body shop – into a mixed-use development with vastly improved streetscape, landscape, and public use space, significantly improving the pedestrian experience to and from the Twinbrook Metro Station and enlivening the area.

Following this Application and the subsequent necessary processes, including a pre-application community meeting, the Applicant intends to file a Project Plan application (the “Project Plan”) pursuant to Section 25.07.07.3 of the Zoning Ordinance and a Level 2 Site Plan Application (the “Site Plan”) pursuant to Section 25.07.05.3.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The Property is primarily zoned Mixed-Use Transit District (“MXTD”), with 1700 Chapman zoned Planned Development, Twinbrook Commons (“PD-TC”). The entirety of the Property is located within the boundaries of the 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan (the “Rockville Pike Plan”) in the area identified as the South Pike. As noted, the Applicant is the contract purchaser and developer of the properties identified as 1800 and 1818 Chapman Avenue (previously defined as “1800 Chapman”). 1800 Chapman is comprised of approximately 49,178 square feet of area, identified as Block 4, Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Halpine subdivision recorded in Plat Book B, Page 28 of the Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland (the “Land Records”). The WMATA Redevelopment Site is identified as a portion of 1700 Chapman Avenue. 1700 Chapman is identified as Block B, Lot 1 of the Twinbrook Station subdivision on a record plat recorded in the Land Records at Plat No. 23781. While 1700 Chapman is approximately 359,016 square feet in size, the WMATA Redevelopment Site sought to be incorporated into the Project is approximately 61,786 square feet. Collectively, 1800 Chapman and the WMATA Redevelopment Site total approximately 110,964 square feet of existing lot area. The Property is bordered by Chapman Avenue to the west, the Metro tracks and CSX/MARC rail line to the east, Twinbrook Metro Station to the north, and Thompson Avenue to the south.

The Rockville Pike Plan designates 1800 Chapman for core (transit-oriented) land uses. *p. 4-22*. The Plan notes that the “core is where the highest density should be encouraged, by 1) allowing the tallest building heights in the Plan Area and 2) requiring that the majority of building facades be located at the sidewalk.” *p. 4-24*. The WMATA Redevelopment Site is also located within the boundaries of the Rockville Pike Plan. As noted, this site is zoned PD-TC. Pursuant to Section 25.14.30(a) of the Zoning Ordinance, the “PD-TC Zone is regulated in accordance with the preliminary development plan approved by the Mayor and Council by Resolution No. 9-05 on April 4, 2005, as may be amended”. On April 4, 2005, the Mayor and Council approved Preliminary Development Plan No. PDP2004-0009 for a 26.49-acre site (including the WMATA



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Property) (the “PDP”). The WMATA Redevelopment Site is identified on the PDP as Block B3 and approved for a 6-9 level structured parking garage.

The 1800 Chapman assemblage is currently improved with two single-story buildings – one that appears to be vacant and the other an auto body shop – comprised of approximately 20,000 square feet and surface parking. The WMATA Redevelopment Site is currently unimproved except for a SWM pond. As noted, immediately north of the Property is the Twinbrook Metro Station, and immediately east of the Property are the Metro tracks and CSX/MARC rail line. The property to the west across Chapman Avenue is developed with the six-story Galvan at Twinbrook, which includes multi-family residential dwellings above ground-floor retail, a grocery store, and restaurant uses. South of the Property, across Thompson Avenue, is the six-story Escher project, which also contains multi-family residential dwellings above ground-floor retail. Notably, there are no single-family detached residential units anywhere in the vicinity of the Property, as directly across the Metro and CSX/MARC tracks from the Property is the east side of the Twinbrook Metro Station and a four-story office building just south of that located on Parklawn Drive.

As a result, the proposed building height for the Project – maximum building height of 120 feet – is appropriate for the proximity of the Project directly adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro Station, less than 300 feet from the pedestrian entrance on the west side of the station. Located closer to the Twinbrook Metro Station’s west side than any recent redevelopment project in the area, the Property is ideally situated for the proposed transit-oriented, mixed-use Project. It will further enliven and activate this growing area near the Twinbrook Metro Station with a variety of uses, and a vastly improved public and pedestrian experience for anyone traveling to and from Metro.

BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF WORK NARRATIVE

In order to develop 1800 Chapman and the WMATA Redevelopment Site with the Project, the PDP will need to be amended. Pursuant to Section 25.14.07.d.3.a.ii of the Zoning Ordinance, the development standards of the “equivalent zone” would apply to that portion of an approved planned development for which an amendment to the planned development documents is being sought. Per Section 25.14.30.b, the designated equivalent zone for PD-TC is the MXTD Zone (the same as 1800 Chapman is zoned). Section 25.14.07.e.2 in turn notes that the vehicle by which a PDP is to be amended is a Project Plan.

It should be noted that the Project itself, based on the Property size, number of dwelling units proposed, square footage of non-residential uses proposed, residential area impact, and traffic impact, does not accumulate the number of points that would otherwise trigger Project Plan review per Section 25.07.02.b.1 of the Zoning Ordinance. The only reason that a Project Plan approval is required prior to what would otherwise have been merely a Level 2 Site Plan application is due to the PDP amendment. As a result, the Applicant has discussed with City Staff that the Project Plan and Level 2 Site Plan applications may be submitted for concurrent review, which all agree is both most efficient for the Applicant but also most efficient for City Staff. The applications would proceed jointly for review but, at the time that they are ready for public hearing before the Planning Commission, the Project Plan would proceed first, with action taken by the Mayor and Council on



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the Project Plan application prior to action by the Planning Commission on the Level 2 Site Plan application.

As part of the Project Plan application, the Applicant will be seeking a parking reduction pursuant to Section 25.16.03.h.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, described further below.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicant proposes to unify the currently disparate pieces of the Property – a single-story vacant building, an auto body shop, and a SWM pond – into an activated, mixed-use project that makes the highest and best use of the site directly adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro Station. As such, the Property has direct connection to transit (Metro and bus), vehicular, and pedestrian access connecting the Property to the rest of the region.

Notably, the Project proposes a new bus loop into the Twinbrook Metro Station along the east side of the Property adjacent to the Metro tracks and CSX/MARC rail line. This one-way loop will be accessed from Thompson Avenue where buses will proceed into the Twinbrook Metro Station and then exit onto Chapman Avenue. In order to accommodate this, the Applicant will be replacing the existing SWM pond on the WMATA Redevelopment Site with an underground vault located within the Project. This proposal, coordinated closely with WMATA, will vastly improve the functioning of the Twinbrook Metro Station as a whole, and the bus loop in particular, while accommodating a variety of needs and uses on the Property in a creative, cooperative manner.

The Project then proposes a building with a maximum height of 120 feet, comprised of approximately 5,870 square feet of ground-floor retail, approximately 440 multi-family dwelling units (including 15% moderately priced dwelling units), and approximately 428 parking spaces. As part of the Project Plan application, the Applicant will be seeking approval of a parking reduction of 20% pursuant to Section 25.16.03.h.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, on the basis that the Project is literally adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro Station, with its main residential access less than 300 feet from the pedestrian access into the station; that there are numerous bus routes in the immediate vicinity of the Project, including the directly adjacent bus loop at the Twinbrook Metro Station and numerous routes along nearby Rockville Pike; that there is a major public parking facility (the parking garage at the Metro Station) fewer than 700 feet from the Project; and that the Project is also directly adjacent to the Chapman Avenue bicycle lane.

The Project proposes one below-grade level of parking, and two levels of parking above-grade. On the first floor along with parking will be located retail. Multi-family residential units will be located on floors three through 10. A large courtyard, approximately 20,000 square feet, will also be located on the third floor, central to the Project with southern exposure. Amenities including a fitness room and club room will be located in the building adjacent to the courtyard, and the courtyard itself will have a pool, cabanas, lounge seating, outdoor kitchen and grilling areas, entertainment lawn, fireplace feature, putting green, and bocce ball court.

The proposed building will involve the construction of a concrete podium of three levels above the average grade plane and seven stories of metal load-bearing stud with composite floor system



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above. Residential amenity space, the main residential lobby, and retail space will be provided along the Chapman Avenue frontage of the Property, and are intended to activate the street and enhance the pedestrian experience. The remainder of the ground floor and the second floor is parking that will be screened from view with either a perforated metal or metal mesh system (or similar), and provides the opportunity to host a large graphic, abstract images or public art. The scale of the screens and visibility from the both the Twinbrook Metro Station and the metro tracks will provide the opportunity to create a unique visual landmark for both the development and the City of Rockville. It will also serve as a backdrop to the proposed primary public use space located at the east side of the Project, as well as along the walk on the northern side that connects the pedestrian to the plaza at the corner of Chapman and Bouic Avenues.

From a massing standpoint, the Project will be broken into two main forms. The main bar along Chapman Avenue will have a more contemporary aesthetic and will appear to be “lifted” above the storefront enclosing the retail, residential lobby and amenity spaces and the public plaza, while the rest of the building will have a more modern approach with a few playful elements and will be grounded with a masonry base.

Vehicular access into the building will be near the southeast corner of the Project from Thompson Avenue. Adjacent and to the west of the garage entrance will be the loading area. The Project proposes 15% (approximately 16,645 square feet) of public open space, comprised of three primary spaces: (1) a large space located on the entire east side of the Project, between the building and the bus loop; (2) an approximately 3,376 square-foot space located on the Property adjacent to the Chapman Avenue right-of-way; and (3) an approximately 1,055 square-foot space located on the northern side of the Project directly adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro Station.

The east side of the Project is envisioned as a main threshold and important connection for commuters from the Twinbrook Metro Station. A pocket park will welcome pedestrians with enhanced paving, lighting, seating, and bio-retention planters, and wayfinding is proposed to provide a safe and unique connector to Thompson Avenue. Appropriate barriers will be provided between the bus lane and public space. A fenced-in urban dog run, around 2,000 square feet, could be integrated into this space to provide a much needed amenity for residents and the general public. There are no publicly accessible dog parks within a quarter-mile radius of the site. The space will also integrate artful representation of water that weaves throughout the space, revealing stormwater conveyance and treatment on site and connecting the public to understanding the larger watershed. This story will continue to wrap around to the space on the northern side, again with artful terraced bio-retention planters lining the generous and improved sidewalk. This walk leads into the third space, a welcoming plaza at the corner of Chapman Avenue. Terraced steps with integrated seating and planters will define this space and provide a place for pedestrians to gather. Lighting, enhanced planting, and bike racks conveniently located will improve the overall experience. The Chapman Avenue streetscape will be improved with hardscape, lighting, street trees, landscaping, and benches for placemaking. The Thompson Avenue frontage will also be improved with hardscape, street trees, and landscaping, and, in totality, this will vastly improve the pedestrian experience as one travels to and from the Twinbrook Metro Station along the Property’s frontage.



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The Project complies with the applicable development standards for the MXTD Zone set forth in Section 25.13.05.b.1 of the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Development Standard	Required/Permitted	Proposed
Maximum height (in feet)	120 feet	120 feet
Minimum open area required (percent of project area)	15%	15%
Minimum public use space required within open area (percent of project area)	15%	15%
Minimum width at front lot line (in feet)	10 feet	316 feet (Chapman Avenue) 210 feet (Thompson Avenue)
Setbacks abutting public right-of-way	None	0 feet
Side setback abutting residential land	25 feet or height of building, whichever is greater	N/A
Side setback abutting non-residential land	None, 10 feet minimum if provided	0 feet
Rear setback abutting residential land	25 feet or height of building, whichever is greater	N/A
Rear setback abutting non-residential land	None, 10 feet minimum if provided	0 feet

Further, Section 25.13.05.a.2.d of the Zoning Ordinance states that the percentage of a building facade that must be located at the build-to line varies by the roadway classification that the property fronts. Here, the Rockville Pike Plan identifies both Chapman Avenue and Thompson Avenue as Business District Class II streets, which require a minimum of 30% of the building façade at the build-to line. The Project conforms with this minimum percentage on Chapman Avenue, though is slightly short of it along Thompson Avenue due to the need for transformers and micro-biofilters. The Project also will comply with the “Other Standards and Requirements for New Development or Redevelopment” as provided in Section 25.13.05.c of the Zoning Ordinance, the “Additional Design Guidelines” per Section 25.13.06, and the “Special Design Regulations” for the MXTD Zone as provided in Section 25.13.07.a, as will be detailed in the Project Plan and Site Plan submissions. Lastly, the Applicant’s preliminary analysis indicates that there are adequate public facilities with respect to transportation, schools, fire and rescue, and water and sewer to accommodate the proposed Project. This will be detailed further in the upcoming Project Plan submission.



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LIST OF ENCLOSED APPLICATION PLANS AND MATERIALS

- (1) Completed Application for Pre-Application Meeting;
- (2) Application Filing Fee;
- (3) Preliminary Site Plan (12 copies; CD with pdf);
- (4) Project Description and Scope of Work Narrative (12 copies);
- (5) Transportation Scoping Intake Form (12 copies; separate check for filing fee);
- (6) Pre-Application Stormwater Management Concept Package (2 copies; separate check for filing fee);
- (7) NRI/FSD as submitted to Forestry.

Thank you for your consideration of this Application. We look forward to completing the pre-application process, and to filing the Project Plan and Site Plan applications which will more fully describe and depict the Project. Should you have any questions or need any additional information at this time, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Wire Gill LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Dlhopsky". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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