



111 Maryland Avenue | Rockville, Maryland 20850-2364 | 240-314-5000
www.rockvillemd.gov

Development Review Comments

January 28, 2025

PAM2025-00155

255 Rockville Pike

The following are Development Review comments from City of Rockville staff related to the project submission.

Reviewing Staff

Planning & Development Services (PDS)

Project Manager:

Kimia Zolfagharian (KZ), Principal Planner
kzolfagharian@rockvillemd.gov

Comprehensive Planning:

Andrew Reitelbach (AR), Principal Planner
areitelbach@rockvillemd.gov

Forestry Reviewer:

Shaun Ryan (SR), Development Review Supervisor
sryan@rockvillemd.gov

Fire Reviewer:

Charles Biggus (CB), Fire Plans Examiner
cbiggus@rockvillemd.gov

Building Reviewer:

Chris Dempwolf (CD), Buildings Plan Examiner Supervisor
cdempwolf@rockvillemd.gov

Dept. of Public Works (DPW)

Engineering Reviewer:

Sean Murphy (SM), Principal Civil Engineer
smurphy@rockvillemd.gov

Traffic and Transportation Reviewers:

Andrew Luetkemeier (AWL), Principal Transportation Engineer
aluetkemier@rockvillemd.gov

Faramarz Mokhtari (FM), Senior Transportation Planner

fmokhtari@rockvillemd.gov

**Housing and Community
Development (HCD)**

Housing Reviewer:

Punam Thukral (PT), Housing Specialist
pthukral@rockvillemd.gov

Recreation and Parks (RPD)

Parks Reviewer:

Christine Henry (CH), Deputy Director
chenry@rockvillemd.gov

City Manager's Office

Publicly Accessible Art in Private

Development (AIPD) Reviewer:

Anne O'Dell (AO), Arts, Culture, and History Program Manager
aodell@rockvillemd.gov

PDS Comments

Development & Zoning (KZ)

1. The purpose of a Pre-Application Meeting (PAM) with the Development Review Committee (DRC) is not to approve/disapprove aspects of a development plan. It is a meeting that provides an early opportunity for City Staff to give general advice to an applicant in the preparation of a site plan, project plan, or special exception, to discuss the application process and schedule going forward, and to address any concerns raised by the community. Staff strives to identify major issues but does not perform a full and complete review for compliance with all aspects of the code, which is done at the application phase.
2. Zoning District: Planned Development Zone (PD-RCI, Rockville Center, Inc.). See Sec. 25.14.28 of the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Conversion of the existing office building to multi-unit residential use is proposed.
4. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Policy Designation: OCRM – Office, Commercial and Residential Mix, P – Public Park
5. Planning Area: Planning Area 1 – Town Center, Focus Area A2
6. The proposed plans are subject to the following previous approvals:
 - 1) PDP1994-00001
 - i. This Preliminary Development Plan covers 255 Rockville Pike, 199/198/196 East Montgomery Avenue, 41 Maryland Avenue, Amendment to 199/198/196 E. Mont. Ave.
 - ii. Subsequent amendments, PDP1994-0001a, PDP1994-0001b
 - iii. Residential uses are permitted in this Preliminary Development Plan
 - iv. Amendments: PDP1994-0001A-E
 - v. Max. 117 units approved with PDP1994-0001E
 - 2) USA1996-0565B
 - 3) USA1984-300D
 - 4) USE1984-300
 - 5) USE98-0583
7. Per Zoning Compliance Letter ZON2023-0025 and ZON2017-0002: The zoning regulations that apply to this property have changed since approval of the Use Permit. The property as it exists does not comply with the development standards of the PD-RCI Zone, as the requirements anticipate redevelopment of the property in compliance with those standards. In addition, the site may not comply with certain other

- requirements of the City's current Zoning Ordinance, such as requirements for public use space, which did not exist when the development was initially approved. However, Sec. 25.08.07 of the Zoning Ordinance states that sites such as this that complied with the prior Zoning Ordinance are deemed to be conforming under the current ordinance. In the event of damage or destruction of the building due to casualty that is outside the control of the property owner, the structure may be reconstructed to the density and configuration which existed immediately prior to the destruction.
8. The property is a record lot, being Lot 2-F of the Rockville Town Center subdivision, recorded as Plat 19531 on October 24, 1994.
 9. Per Sec. 25.07.02.b.1, the proposed development appears to have a point valuation of 9:
 - 1) Tract size of 1.1 to 2.5 acres = 2
 - 2) Greater than 150 dwelling units = 4
 - 3) 5,000 or fewer square feet of Non-Residential Space = 1
 - 4) Residential Impact Area = 1
 - 5) Traffic Impact of fewer than 30 trips (reduction from previous use) = 1
 - 6) Points Total = 9
 10. Land Use Planning Process:
 - 1) Level 2 Site Plan application will be required per Sec. 25.14.07.f (Site Plan Required) and Article 7 (Procedures for Site Plans and Project Plans, Special Exception and other permits).
 - 2) Following approval of the Level 2 Site Plan application, a "signature set" will be required for final approval.
 - 3) Project Plan application required since the original PD is being amended.
 - 4) Following approval of the Project Plan and Level 2 Site Plan applications, a Final Plat application be required to establish required easements and create the proposed commercial site.
 11. Land Use Review Timelines:
 - 1) Level 2 Site Plan and Project Plan: initial submittal review is 6 weeks; subsequent reviews are 3-4 weeks; final submittal due 7 weeks before the initial Planning Commission hearing, and 8 weeks before the initial Mayor and Council hearing.
 - 2) Level 2 Site Plan Signature Set: initial submittal review is 2 weeks; subsequent reviews are 1-2 weeks.

- 3) Final Record Plat: initial submittal review is 3 weeks; subsequent reviews are 2 weeks; final submittal due 6 weeks before the initial Planning Commission hearing. The typical timeline for the Final Record Plat review and decision process is 60-75 days from submittal of a complete application.
 - 4) Total typical review timeline is highly variable depending on applicant submittal timelines and responsiveness to City comments and requests.
12. The plans show "Future Phase 2"; since a concurrent Project Plan and Level 2 Site Plan are anticipated, please clarify whether the Level 2 Site Plan will include the Phase 2 of the project. If so, provide details of Phase 2 with SWM Concept, T&T, and W&S analyses, etc.
 13. Per page 55 of Resolution 10-05 for PDP1994-00001, Rockville Center Concept Plan, Drawing #2, Building height and setback axonometric the max permitted height for the subject property is 158 feet max to 217 feet max. Provide the elevation from which the height is being measured for each Phase.
 14. Provide street sections and note any changes from the approved street sections per PDP1994-00001.
 15. Provide pedestrian circulation plan around the subject property.
 16. Provide renderings of the character of the proposed buildings and elevations depicting the materials.
 17. The building sections included on Sheet A-3.01 do not appear to show the proposed tower that is to be included in Phase 2. Please provide this information with the Site Plan and Project Plan submission.
 18. Provide additional information about programming of the parking garage, floor plans and elevations depicting any screening provisions, and design solutions to enhance the visual impact of parking garage.
 19. Provide conceptual plans depicting the open space programming along street frontages and in the courtyards.
 20. The 255 Rockville Pike: Frontage Improvements exhibit dated January 17th, received January 22nd 2025, is under review and comments will be transmitted subsequent to this comment letter.
 21. The City has received a PAM application at 41 Maryland Avenue which is also seeking an amendment to Planned Development Zone (PD-RCI, Rockville Center, Inc.). Coordination of the proposed amendments will be required once Project Plan and Level 2 Site Plan applications are received.
 22. MCDOT and SHA comments are shared in a separate attachment to this letter.

23. See plan markups for additional comments.

Comprehensive Planning (AR)

24. This application is compliant with the City's Comprehensive Plan. The application is located within Planning Area 1. The subject property is identified by the Comprehensive Plan as a Focus Area and is also directly adjacent to two identified Projects – Rockville Metro station re-design (including the pedestrian bridge) and the re-design of Promenade Park. It also forwards the general policy recommendation for the planning area to "Increase the number of residents and housing density in Town Center, to provide additional housing options for residents across the full range of income levels and to provide additional demand for the commercial uses in this mixed-use environment." - page 263. The application is also consistent with many of the broader objectives and goals within the housing element of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, as the BRT system continues to move forward with MCDOT, it will be important to have discussions with the property owner on the design of the proposed station nearby.

Per Section 25.14.01 of the Rockville Zoning Ordinance, any structure in Rockville proposed for demolition must undergo an Evaluation of Significance by the Historic District Commission prior to demolition. The Historic District Commission meets once per month, on the third Thursday of the month. Please contact history@rockvillemd.gov for any questions about the Evaluation of Significance process, or to receive/submit an application for review by the Historic District Commission.

Forestry (SR)

25. See site plan for comments.

Fire (CB)

26. See site plan for comments.

Building (CD)

27. No comments at this time.

DPW Comments

Engineering (SM)

28. See site plan for comments.

Traffic and Transportation (AWL/FM)

29. See site plan for comments.

HCD Comments

Housing (PT)

30. In compliance with Rockville City Code Chapter 13.5, the applicant is required to provide 15% of the total units as moderately priced dwelling units (MPDU).
31. The applicant must identify the location of the MPDU units, which must be evenly distributed throughout the development in all the levels of the building so as not to concentrate all the MPDUs in one section of the building.
32. The MPDU must be income tiered at 30%-120% of AMI.
33. Prior to issuance of building permits, a program agreement for the MPDUs must be approved by the Mayor and Council and the City Attorney. We have a checklist that the applicant will fill out with all the information needed to draft these agreements. The checklist and other relevant documents will be officially submitted to the City Attorney's Office by MPDU program specialist and the City Attorney's Office will begin drafting the agreements after the applicant receives site plan approval from the Planning Commission.

RPD Comments

Recreation and Parks (CH)

34. Coordination of the pedestrian bridge, Truck Street, and Promenade Park will occur during the Project Plan review phase.

CMO Comments

Publicly Accessible Art in Private Development (AO)

35. The Publicly Accessible Art in Private Development Ordinance applies. The Publicly Accessible Art in Private Development application, implementation manual, and information about the ordinance can be found here: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/2081/Publicly-Accessible-Art>. There are multiple options for how the expenditure may be applied. Please contact Anne O'Dell for more information and to discuss options and what the most logical course would be considering the developer's vision.

Note: At the time of the next submittal, the applicant will need to provide a point- by-point response letter noting how the staff review comments have been addressed. Comments provided in letter format can be addressed letter format. Comments provided in the plans should be addressed via plan markups rather than letter format. See attached example.