



Memo

To: Mayor and City Council

CC: Tracey Nicholson, City Administrator

From: Jim Chandler, Assistant City Administrator and Director, Community & Economic Development
Katie Gerbes, Community Planner

Date: April 5, 2018

Re: CSP-18002: Magruder Pointe

Attachments: CSP-18002.pdf
Statement of Justification CSP-18002
Zoning Map
Traditional Residential Neighborhood Summary
Traditional Residential Neighborhood Goals & Recommendations
Section 27-548.26
Table of Uses
Zoning Ordinance Section 27

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Mayor and City Council with a detailed analysis and Staff recommendation regarding Conceptual Site Plan application CSP-18002, for the Magruder Pointe Development.

Project Summary

- The applicant is proposing a combination of single-family detached homes and townhouses at 4017 Hamilton Street – the site of the former WSSC headquarters;
- The property is located within the “Traditional Residential Neighborhood” character area of the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan;
- The Table of Uses for the Traditional Residential Neighborhood character area permits the development of single-family detached and semi-detached homes, ‘if allowed in the underlying zone’

- The lower lot of the subject property underlying zoning is Open Space (O-S), therefore townhouse and other semi-detached dwelling units are not permitted by right;
- The applicant has filed a Conceptual Site Plan (CSP), as permitted Section 27-548.26 of the County Zoning Ordinance, in order to amend the Table of Uses for the Gateway Arts District Development District Overlay Zone (DDOZ) Sector Plan to allow the construction of townhouses within the Traditional Residential Neighborhood character area;
- Staff recommends support of Conceptual Site Plan application CSP-18002, with the condition that a corresponding Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPSD) application shall be consistent with the limited density goals of the Traditional Residential Neighborhood (TRN) Character Area and shall not exceed a maximum of ten (10) dwelling units per acre.

Project Details

Magruder Pointe is a redevelopment application to construct single-family homes and townhouses at 4017 Hamilton Street, the location of the former Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) Headquarters. The subject property is composed of two parcels, which together total 8.26 acres. The “upper” lot currently houses the vacant WSSC building, and the “lower” lot is utilized as a parking lot. The parcels are not contiguous, as they are separated by 40th Place.

The upper lot is zoned R-55 and totals 4.66 acres. The lower lot is zoned O-S (open space) and totals 3.6 acres. Both parcels fall within the Gateway Arts District Overlay Zone, and are located within the “Traditional Residential Neighborhood” (TRN) character area.

The Gateway Arts District Sector Plan comes with a “Table of Uses,” which specifies uses are permitted in each of the different character areas of the plan geography. Within the Table of Uses, single-family homes, known in the plan document as “dwelling, one-family, detached,” are permitted by-right within the Traditional Residential Neighborhood character area. Townhouses, and other semi-detached dwellings, are permitted ‘by-right’ if allowed in the underlying zone. Because townhouses are not permitted in the O-S underlying zones of the subject property, the applicant is seeking an amendment to the table of uses to allow the development of townhouses.

The applicant is utilizing Section 27-548.26 of the Zoning Ordinance, which allows for the filing of a Conceptual Site Plan in order to amend the Table of Uses listed within the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan, in order to permit townhouse development within the TRN in the O-S and R-55 zones. If an amendment is granted, the amendment would be site specific, applying only to the subject property and would not impact the Table of Uses for other properties within the City or the larger Gateway Arts District.

The applicant must provide evidence demonstrating that the proposed uses, in this case, townhouses, are consistent with the nature and intent of the Traditional Residential Neighborhood character area. The definition of the TRN from the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan reads:

“Traditional Residential Neighborhood Character Areas goal to present the single-family residential neighborhood character as an anchor of the Arts District, while supporting artists who produce and teach from their homes...the Arts District single-family communities are generally walkable, laid out on a grid, and have few cul-de-sacs or loops. Small lots, with 20-foot setbacks, single-apron driveways, and minimal lot widths are the norm and add to the appeal of these neighborhoods. Generally, density is four to ten units per acre.”

For the purposes of the CSP, the applicant has submitted a “bubble diagram” showing the locations proposed for the townhouses versus locations for the single-family homes. At this time, the applicant has not settled on a final unit count, nor is the unit count relevant to the CSP application. Exact unit count and siting locations will be determined with the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPSD), which Staff expects the applicant to submit to M-NCPPC in Summer 2018.



Summary of Land-Use Review and Approval

The Conceptual Site Plan process works similar to any other development application approval- the City of Hyattsville receives a referral from Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), and provides its opinion of the application for consideration by the Prince George’s County Planning Board. Section 27-548.26 of the County Zoning Ordinance specifies that, “The (M-NCPPC) Technical Staff shall review and submit a report on the application, and the Planning Board shall hold a public hearing and submit a recommendation to the District Council. Before final action the Council may remand the application to the Planning Board for review of specific issues.

Variance Requests

There are no variances associated with the Conceptual Site Plan application.

Planning Committee Review

On February 27, 2018, applicant met with the Hyattsville Planning Committee to present their proposal for the WSSC site. The presentation included all facets of their development – conceptual site plan, preliminary plan of subdivision and detailed site plan details. At this meeting, members of the public in attendance were also invited to give their brief comments on the plan. Due to the heavy attendance in the room and the length of the meeting, Planning Committee pushed making recommendations until the March 20, 2018 meeting.

At the March Planning Committee meeting, members discussed the merits and shortfalls of the conceptual site plan and preliminary plan of subdivision facets of the proposal. The committee had one adopted recommendation pertaining to the conceptual site plan, which reads:

- The Committee is split on whether or not this plan is consistent with the goals and values of the Traditional Residential Neighborhood character area. The Committee is in agreement that the upper lot is consistent, but the Committee is split on whether or not the lower parcel is consistent. For lower lot, there is a concern that the density and configuration do not fully meet the intent of the TRN. The Committee would like to see other options and arrangements to the bottom parcel. The other half of the committee like the density on the lower lot and it is important that the green space and are of the opinion that proposed density it consistent with the density surrounding the park in other areas where there are apartment buildings.

Regarding the Planning Committee comments, it is noted by Staff that the CSP application is not speaking to density, just allowing the use. The determination of density and related conditions are subject to the preliminary plan of subdivision application.

Minutes from the February 27th and March 20th Planning Committee meetings are attached.

Staff Review and Recommendations

The Gateway Arts District Sector plan describes the TRN as walkable communities made up of single-family homes on small lots with front yards and single apron driveways. While the townhomes in question are not single-family detached homes, they are fee-simple, single-family homes. The subject application is not a multi-family building or other rental dwelling – units are intended to be owner occupied by a single family. Staff's opinion is that this differentiation makes the purposed amendment request consistent with the intent of the TRN.

When considering this application, it is also important to consider the surrounding zoning and built environment. In addition to the plethora of single-family, detached homes in the area surrounding the subject site, also within the Traditional Residential Neighborhood and adjacent to the subject site lies the Top of the Park Apartment complex. This property is zoned R-10, multi-family, high density residential. Also in the immediate vicinity of the subject site lies the Prince George's Apartment Complex, which is considered by the zoning ordinance to be multi-family, medium density residential (R-18). The proposed use of townhouses would fall in line with R-T, which is categorically less dense than multifamily zoning, per the Zoning Ordinance. Staff believe that the development of townhouses on the lower lot provides an appropriate transition from the high-density, multi-family land uses found on the periphery of Magruder Park.

As stated in the analysis of the application above, the subject property lies wholly within the Traditional Residential Neighborhood (TRN) character area of the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan. While the

development of townhouses is not permitted by right, it is Staff's opinion that the intent of the development is consistent with the goals and recommendations of the TRN character area.

Finally, per the Zoning Ordinance Section 27-548.20, the purpose of Development District Overlay Zones, such as the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan, is to, "provide flexibility within a regulatory framework to encourage innovative design solutions," and, "to promote an appropriate mix of land uses [and] to encourage compact development." More specifically, Section 27-548.22 states, "development district standards may allow uses prohibited in the underlying zone where the uses are compatible with the goals of the Development District and the purposes of the D-D-O zone." It is Staff's opinion that this section of the zoning ordinance appropriately warrants an amendment to the table of uses.

As a result of the findings detailed above, Staff recommend that the City Council support Conceptual Site Plan application CSP-18002 with the following condition:

- Allowable cumulative density on the site shall not exceed a maximum of ten (10) dwelling units per acre.
- The applicant shall demonstrate efforts to propose a cumulative density not greater than nine (9) dwelling units per acre.

The density figure provided in the condition above is consistent with the limit of density of the density goals for the Traditional Residential Neighborhood character area within the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan. As noted previously, this CSP application will not determine unit counts, but Staff is of the opinion that it is appropriate for a density limit to be incorporated into the amendment to ensure the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision application is consistent with the Gateway Arts District Sector Plan goals and objectives for this character area.

Next Steps

CSP application CSP-18002 is scheduled on the "Discussion" agenda at the April 16, 2018 City Council meeting. Staff anticipates that this item will come back before the Council for 'Action' on May 7, 2018. The Planning Board hearing for the application has not been scheduled, but is anticipated to take place in late May/early June.