

Town of Riverdale Park
Special Legislative Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2013

In Attendance

Mayor Vernon Archer
CM Jonathan Ebbeler, Ward 1
CM Alan Thompson, Ward 2
CM David Lingua, Ward 3

Sara Imhulse, Town Administrator

Paul Mortensen, Architect

Call to Order

Mayor Archer called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda

CM Thompson made a motion to approve the Special Legislative Meeting agenda for May 11, 2013. The motion was seconded by CM Ebbeler. Vote: 3-0 (favorable)

Legislative Action Items

1. Motion to send to the Planning Board a letter of approval with conditions for the Cafritz Project PPS 4-13002 (Ward 1)

CM Ebbeler made a motion to send to the Planning Board a letter of approval with conditions for the Cafritz Project PPS 4-13002. The motion was seconded by CM Lingua. Vote: 3-0 (favorable)

Discussion:

The Council discussed the recommendations and conditions outlined in the staff report for the Cafritz Project PPS 4-13002. The Council also discussed comments/conditions from the MUTC committee. The Council made a number of revisions to the draft letter to the Planning Board.

Public Comments:

University Park Councilmember Arlene Christiansen discussed various concerns with the Cafritz Project PPS.

Dannielle Glaros discussed County policy CB 2 regarding sidewalks.

Kate Kelly discussed concerns regarding the SHA plan for Baltimore Avenue and whether the Council should withhold conditional approval.

Lou King discussed the Town's desire to make Baltimore Avenue pedestrian and biker friendly.

2. Motion to send a letter to the Planning Board and County Council to request a change in geographic boundaries for the proposed plan update to the College Park/Riverdale Park Transit District Development Plan (TDDP)- Wards 1 & 2

CM Thompson made a motion to send a letter to the Planning Board and County Council to request a change in geographic boundaries for the proposed plan update to the College Park/Riverdale Park Transit District Development Plan (TDDP) to extend to Kenilworth Avenue. The motion was seconded by CM Lingua. After some discussion CM Thompson withdrew the motion.

New Business

The Council discussed the County's Special Taxing District legislation and the exclusion of multifamily units.

CM Thompson requested that a public meeting be scheduled for Tuesday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the bridge landing Option J and any associated issues.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

Adjournment

CM Thompson made a motion to adjourn the special legislative meeting at 12:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by CM Ebbeler. Vote: 3-0 (favorable)

Typed from notes by JEB.

May 13, 2013

Honorable Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Chairman
Prince George's County Planning Board
County Administration Building – Room 4134
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Re: Cafritz Property, 4-13002

Dear Chairman Hewlett and Members of the Planning Board:

At a special legislative session on May 11, 2013, the Riverdale Park Town Council voted to recommend APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS of 4-13002, Preliminary Plan of Subdivision for the Cafritz Property subject to inclusion of the conditions set forth below. The Town Council's support for the PPS is contingent upon the Mayor attesting at the Planning Board hearing that sufficient progress has been made in negotiations with the University of Maryland about the landing of the Option J CSX Crossing to address resident concerns regarding the impact of that crossing on quality of life and traffic.

As part of the Town Council's recommendation the Town Council urges the Planning Board to include the following conditions as part of the Planning Board's approval of the PPS:

1. Prior to signature approval of the of the PPS, the Preliminary Plan and Tree Conservation Plan shall be revised (i) to depict Van Buren Street as extending through Parcel G as a divided street running north and south along the eastern and western boundaries of Parcel G, and (ii) assigning separate parcel designations for the northern and southern segments of the street.
2. Prior to signature approval of the PPS, the Preliminary Plan and Tree Conservation Plan shall be revised to show an extension of street right-of-way at Parcel FF (46th Street) and Parcel HH (47th Street) from Woodberry Street to the northern property boundary.
3. Prior to signature approval of the PPS, the Preliminary Plan and Tree Conservation Plan shall be revised to show an extension of street right-of-way at Parcel JJ and Parcel II (east/west oriented street) going west to the eastern property line of the Post Office Property Parcel A.
4. Prior to signature approval of the PPS, the Preliminary Plan and Tree Conservation Plan shall be revised to show an extension of street right-of-way at Parcel II (Rhode Island Avenue) south to the southern property boundary.
5. Prior to signature approval of the PPS, General Note 32 on the Cover Page of the PPS shall be revised to read: "PUBLIC ROADS: ALL PUBLIC ROADS EXCEPT FOR PARCEL OO AND THE CSX BRIDGE CROSSING WILL BE DEDICATED TO THE

TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK. PARCEL OO AND THE CSX BRIDGE CROSSING WILL BE DEDICATED TO PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY."

6. Prior to approval of any detailed site plan for the property, the amount of right-of-way dedication for road widening of U.S. Route 1 as shown on the Preliminary Plan may be reduced in accordance with SHA recommendations, but not less than 52 feet from existing center line to accommodate the lane configurations and on-road bike lane and sidewalk, as recommended by the Riverdale Park M-U-TC Plan.

Comments on Staff Report

The Council has taken the following formal position on these conditions contained in the staff report:

Condition 1(i): The Council supports this concept as long as it does not expand the street width of Van Buren Avenue.

Condition 1(k): The Council does not support this staff recommendation.

Condition 1(p): In light of the new CSX alignment at Option J, the Council does not support this staff recommendation.

Condition 1(q): The Council does not support this staff recommendation

Condition 1(r): In light of the resubmitted PPS plans, the Council does not support this staff recommendation. The Council concurs with the applicant's request in the revised PPS plans dated April 29, 2013, to make 46th Street south of Van Buren Street, and Underwood Road west of the post office property, private streets.

Condition 1(u): The Council does not support this staff recommendation.

Condition 1(w): The Council does not support this staff recommendation. Later in this letter we explain our position on the SHA recommendations.

Condition 1(x)(second sentence): The Council does not support this staff recommendation. Rather, the Council supports the applicant's carefully considered turning radii to provide appropriate access for transit and school buses, pedestrians, and service and emergency vehicles.

Condition 11: In light of the applicant's revised PPS plans dated April 29, 2013, the Council does not support this staff recommendation.

Conditions 33(a) and (b): The Council does not support these staff recommendations. Rather, the Council supports the applicant's carefully considered ROW and sidewalk configurations along Route 1.

Condition 35(c): The Council does not support this staff recommendation. Rather, the Council supports a left and right entrance/exit at Van Buren Avenue.

Condition 37(b): The Council supports this staff recommendation if “motorized vehicle” is inserted before “movements” and “existing” is inserted before “Van Buren Street” where it appears in the third line of Condition 37(b).

Condition 37(d): The Council does not support this staff recommendation. Rather, the Council supports a meandering sidewalk within the linear park along Route 1. Furthermore, the Council supports a condition that by the first building permit, the applicant must show good faith efforts to attempt to make connectivity from the Cafritz property through the WMATA site, rather than such connectivity being required to be constructed, bonded and permitted for construction, or otherwise incorporated into a specific public facilities financing and implementation program as provided in staff’s proposed condition.

Condition 37(e): The Council does not support this staff recommendation.

Condition 37(f): The Council supports this condition except where it conflicts with the road that runs east-west that connects Rivertech Court to Lafayette Avenue.

Condition 37(g): The Council supports this condition. The Council further requests that the intersection of Queensbury Road and Route 1 be included in the list of signals to be coordinated.

Comment on Compliance with Zoning Approval Condition 25(b)

The Council believes that the applicant has demonstrated a “funding mechanism” using public and private funds for the construction of the CSX Crossing as required by Zoning Map Approval Condition 25(b), subject to obtaining all required government approvals prior to approval of the first detailed site plan.

Comment on Woodberry Street Ingress/Egress

Because multiple points of access to and from the new development are encouraged as a way to prevent concentration of traffic at one location, the Council supports the applicant’s proposed ingress/egress options at Woodberry Street.

Comments on current SHA requirements

Although the Town of Riverdale Park strongly supports the Preliminary Plan of Subdivision for the Cafritz development, the Town strongly and categorically disagrees with State Highway Administration’s determination regarding the character of street and amount of right-of-way dedication and roadway pavement on Baltimore Avenue (U.S. Route 1) required along the frontage and north and south of the project site. The amount of pavement is unprecedented on the County’s portion of this critical State corridor. The desire of SHA to favor automobiles over all other land uses, pedestrian uses, streetscape character and bicycle safety is implausible. The

Town Council passed a resolution on April 24, 2013, to formally reject these requirements. A copy of the resolution is attached.

The SHA proposed plan of 880 feet of pavement in front of the proposed Cafritz development completely contradicts the vision of the City of College Park, the Towns of Riverdale Park, University Park, and the City of Hyattsville for this corridor as a “Main Street” within each community and between, and we believe it even contradicts SHA’s goals and aspirations promoted in its own publication When Main Street is a State Highway published in 2003. The impact of the SHA design will completely alter the character of this corridor and its municipalities for future generations. We believe the SHA design for an additional width of 29 feet of asphalt extending into the Cafritz property to allow for wider lanes, dedicated bike lanes and deceleration/free right hand turn lanes is extremely excessive and sets a precedent for Baltimore Avenue to become a higher speed highway into the future. SHA’s design:

- Is wider than the 74 foot pavement width of US-1 at the Interstate 495 on- and off-ramp locations.
- Is completely contradictory and opposite of the designs at the EYA development in Hyattsville where there are no deceleration lanes and no dedicated bike lanes, and on-street parking exists.
- Will never be able to expand the roadway width south of East/West Highway, where buildings within the existing Mixed Use Town Center (MUTC) zone are only offset 15 feet from the curb, or in downtown College Park, where buildings are only 10 to 15 feet off of the curb.
- Will increase traffic speeds above the posted 30 mph through widening lanes, a detrimental practice expressed in SHA’s booklet When Main Street is a State Highway.
- Will not allow the developer to create a multi-modal path for bikes and pedestrians adjacent to, yet meandering along the Baltimore Avenue frontage.
- Will free up motorists to move faster in two unobstructed lanes moving north due to the creation of a deceleration/free right-hand turn lane leading to the new Van Buren Street into the Cafritz site.
- Will further isolate Baltimore Avenue from the overall street network within Riverdale Park.
- Will necessitate the removal of a right turn in and right turn out connection to the new Woodberry Street at the northern end of the Cafritz development which is intended to facilitate greater auto, truck, bike and pedestrian connections to the surrounding community.
- Will make it difficult, if not impossible, to create safe and relatively short crosswalks across Baltimore Avenue at Van Buren Street without requiring even greater mitigating and street widening elements such as pedestrian refuge islands.
- Will make the crosswalk along Baltimore Avenue at Van Buren Street much more unsafe though the conflict of the free right-hand turns crossing the pedestrian pathway. This pedestrian crossing would be much safer if traffic was forced to abide by regular turning motions.
- Will dramatically alter the proposed linear park design fronting the Cafritz development on Baltimore Avenue by removing a 20 to 29 foot depth of park which currently contains several of the proposed saved large specimen trees. This park was designed to contain

existing specimen trees, many new street and park trees, meandering pathways, benches, small play areas, pedestrian scaled lighting and public art. It is intended to be an amenity to the entire community.

- By forcing the entire expansion of Baltimore Avenue to the east, will cause a significant swerving in Baltimore Avenue to the north and south of this site.
- Forces the Applicant to purchase large areas of right of way to the north from WMATA, and to the south from the federal government to allow for tapering the roadway to meet the new expansive street widths.
- Ultimately will alter the adjacent communities' intention that small conflicts within Baltimore Avenue such as great access through many adjacent street turns, narrow lanes, scaled down signage, smaller turn radii, abundant streetscape, pedestrian crossings, pedestrian lighting, on-street parking and varied land uses, all help to minimize street auto speeds and maintain the 30mph standard.

Although the Town, together with all the adjacent municipalities, intends to work with the State Highway Administration to attempt to reduce these requirements, all attempts to date have failed. We will continue to advocate for good urban design on Route 1 as it relates to this property. Riverdale Park's vision for Baltimore Avenue has remained consistent for many years and aligns with the urban vision of this street in College Park, University Park and Hyattsville. This vision is one of a slow speed, multi-modal corridor that provides equal access to pedestrians, bicyclists, buses, autos and servicing trucks which is linked to the greater urban street networks. It is a corridor which links higher density, urban communities and is directly fronted by a wide mix of integrated land uses such as parks, single-family homes, multifamily apartments and condos, office and retail, supported by multiple transit options. This is the opposite of a suburban strip surrounded by single concentrated uses, vast amounts of surface parking lots, wide lanes, focused arterials and collector streets and free right-hand turn lanes.

Sincerely,

Vernon Archer
Mayor