



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
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Marsha S. McLaughlin, Director

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June 2, 2015

Bob Jenkins
Howard Research and Development
10221 Wincopin Circle, 3rd Floor
Columbia, MD 20144

RE: WP-15-144, Downtown Columbia,
Crescent Neighborhood, Areas 1 and 2

Dear Mr. Jenkins:

The Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning considered your request for a waiver from the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations.

As of the date of this letter, the Planning Director **approved** your request to waive **Section 16.144(b)&(g)**. **The applicant is requesting that the requirements for sketch and preliminary plans are waived for the Crescent Neighborhood Areas 1 and 2 as shown on FDP-DC-Crescent-1, and the subdivision begin at Final Plan review.**

Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. A preliminary plan is not required for development in Areas 1 and 2 only, defined as Parcels A-C on the Final Development Plan, and for the Final Plan for Crescent Road and Hickory Ridge Road.
2. Please add a general note referencing this waiver, its purpose, decision date, and conditions of approval on all plans for Areas 1 and 2 utilizing this waiver to bypass the preliminary plan.

Our decision was made based on the following:

Extraordinary Hardship or Practical Difficulty – The Final Development Plan and Neighborhood Concept Plan for the Crescent Neighborhood provided a significant amount of detail for Areas 1 and 2 that would typically be provided during preliminary plan review. A preliminary traffic study was reviewed with the proposed uses and tentative road alignments were agreed to with the Department of Public Works Traffic Engineering Division. Please see attached letter dated September 23, 2014. There are two office buildings that have a potential tenant with time sensitive occupancy deadlines. As such, the additional processing for information that will be provided with the Final and Site Development Plans would be duplicative.

Alternative Proposal – The Downtown Columbia FDP process covers many of the same areas of design and review as the Sketch & Preliminary Plan process, especially with the level of detail provided for Areas 1 and 2, and the decisions outlined in the letter dated September 23, 2014.

Not Detrimental to the Public Interest – Since of all the information that would be provided on the Preliminary Plan has either already been provided for Areas 1 and 2 with the Crescent Neighborhood Final Development Plan (FDP-DC-Crescent-1) and remaining information can be provided and reviewed with the Final Plan, proceeding directly to Final Plan will not be detrimental to the public interest. The revitalization of Downtown Columbia has been determined to be in the public interest through the General Plan Amendments and the accompanying legislation passed by the County Council.

Will Not Nullify the Intent or Purpose of the Regulations – The purpose of the sketch plan is to indicate to the County the intent, scope and timing of the subdivision and to familiarize the Developer of County and State plans which may affect the subdivision, as well as to test for adequate public facilities. The intent of the preliminary plan is

to present detailed data which enables the County to determine whether the proposed layout of the subdivision can be completed in accordance with the approved sketch plan, and the requirements of the Subdivision and Land Development regulations prior to the formulation of final engineering details. The purpose of the sketch plan is fulfilled with the Final Development Plan and associated Neighborhood Documents required for Downtown Columbia revitalization, with an adequate level of detail provided for Areas 1 and 2. Furthermore, the public road alignment is heavily dictated by the approval of Maryland Department of the Environment, which has been reviewing permits for wetland and stream disturbances for the road, as well as State Highway Administration, which is determining how the road network ties into the Broken Land Parkway/Route 29 interchange. Finally, there is a significant phasing plan on file with the Department of Planning and Zoning identifying areas of environmental restoration that will not be impacted by development. Therefore, the County has adequate information to proceed to Final Plan for Areas 1 and 2.

Indicate this waiver petition file number, request, section of the regulations, action, conditions of approval, and date on all related plats, and site development plans, and building permits. This requested waiver will remain valid for one year from the date of this letter or as long as this subdivision remains in active processing.

If you have any questions, please contact Jill Manion-Farrar at (410) 313-2350 or email at jfarrar@howardcountymd.gov.

Sincerely,


Kent Sheubrooks, Chief
Division of Land Development

KS/JMF 

cc: Research
DED
Real Estate Services
GLW