



# HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2350

Voice/Relay

Brian Shepter, Acting Director

FAX 410-313-3467

April 20, 2023

Greg Fitchitt  
Howard Research and Development  
10960 Grantchester Way, Suite 100  
Columbia, MD 21044

RE: WP-23-064, Merriweather District Hotel

Dear Mr. Fitchitt:

This letter is to inform you that your request for alternative compliance to the Howard County Subdivision and Land Development Regulations for the subject project was reviewed.

On April 20, 2023, and pursuant to Section 16.104, the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning, considered and **approved** your request for alternative compliance with respect to **Section 16.156(o)(2)** of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations to reactivate the associated plan (SDP-18-005) since the two-year window to apply for all building permits for commercial development has lapsed, and set a new deadline to submit building permits for the proposed hotel.

The Department of Planning and Zoning hereby determines that you have demonstrated to its satisfaction that strict enforcement of Section 16.156(o)(2) would result in an unreasonable hardship or practical difficulty. This determination is made with consideration of your alternative compliance application and the one (1) item you were required to address, pursuant to Section 16.104(a)(1):

**1. Unreasonable hardship or practical difficulties may result from strict compliance with the regulations.**

The development has proceeded through the Downtown Revitalization process to obtain approval for the Merriweather District Hotel, including a pre-submission community meeting, a Design Advisory Panel review of the SDP, Planning Board approval of the SDP, execution of developer agreements and the payment of fees for the development of the parcel. The development of a hotel is a necessary component of the Downtown Columbia Plan in the Downtown Columbia Revitalization Phasing Chart. Unreasonable hardship may result from strict compliance with the regulations since the delay of the hotel's construction was due to a global pandemic that greatly impacted the hospitality market for several years. The additional time needed is to obtain the financing for the construction of the hotel which is more easily obtained with site development plan approval status maintained. Requiring the SDP to be voided and resubmitted could unintentionally impact downtown revitalization elsewhere in the Downtown area based on the balanced phasing requirement between retail, office, hotel and residential uses. Finally, the hotel has already been included in APFO traffic studies for this neighborhood and elsewhere in Downtown, and the project requires no housing allocations for public schools.

Considering the extent of market impacts due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the inclusion of the hotel as part of the overall vision for both the neighborhood and for Downtown, and the project's completion of all of the required plan review and payments of fees, approval of this alternative compliance to extend the deadline to apply for building permits promotes efficiency of the plan review process.


Approval of this Alternative Compliance is subject to the following conditions:

1. The application of the building permit(s) must be submitted to the Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits on or before **December 1, 2024**.

Indicate this alternative compliance 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 alternative compliance approval will remain valid for the time period specified in the conditions of approval.

If you have any questions, please contact Jill Manion at (410) 313-2350 or email at [jmanion@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jmanion@howardcountymd.gov).

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Anthony Cataldo, AICP, Chief  
Division of Land Development

AC/jam

cc: Research  
DLD - Julia Sauer  
Real Estate Services  
GLW



**Howard County Maryland**  
**Department of Planning and Zoning**  
 3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

(410) 313-2350

DPZ Office Use only:

File No. *WP-23-064*  
 Date Filed

## ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE APPLICATION

**Site Description:** Merriweather District Hotel (Parcel D-7)

**Subdivision Name/Property Identification:** Downtown Columbia - Crescent Neighborhood - Phase 1 Area 3 Phase 2

**Location of property:** 6250 Mango Tree Road

**Existing Use:** Parking      **Proposed Use:** Hotel

**Tax Map:** 36      **Grid:** 1      **Parcel No:** 527      **Election District:** 5

**Zoning District:** NT      **Total site area:** 0.86 Ac

Please list all previously submitted or currently active plans on file with the County (subdivision plans, Board of Appeals petitions, alternative compliance petitions, etc.). If no previous plans have been submitted, please provide a brief history of the site and related information to the request:

FDP-DC-Crescent-1A, SDP-18-005

In the area below, the petitioner shall enumerate the specific numerical section(s) from the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations for which an alternative compliance is being requested and provide a brief summary of the request. Please use the additional page if needed.

Section Reference No.	Brief Summary of Request
16.156.(o).(2)	Establishment of timeframe for building permit application



Section Reference No.	Brief Summary of Request

Signature of Property Owner:  Date: 1/5/23

Signature of Petitioner Preparer:  Date: 4/6/23

Name of Property Owner: HOWARD RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT Name of Petition Preparer: Dan Sweeney

Address: 10960 Grantchester Way, Suite 100 Address: 3909 National Drive, Suite 250

City, State, Zip: Columbia, MD 21044 City, State, Zip: Burtonsville, MD 20866

E-Mail: Greg.Fitchitt@howardhughes.com E-Mail: dsweeney@glwpa.com

Phone No.: 410.964.5445 Phone No.: 410-880-1820

Contact Person: Greg Fitchitt | Contact Person: Dan Sweeney

Owner's Authorization Attached