

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Legislative Session _____ 1990 _____

Bill No. _____ CB-20-1990 _____

Chapter No. _____ 16 _____

Proposed and Presented by _____ The Chairman (by request -
_____ Development Quality Steering Committee) _____

Introduced by _____ Council Members Bell and Pemberton _____

Co-Sponsors _____

Date of Introduction _____ April 3, 1990 _____

ZONING BILL

AN ORDINANCE concerning

Site Planning Guidelines

FOR the purpose of implementing new site planning guidelines.

BY repealing and reenacting with amendments:

Sections 27-107.1

27-274,

27-518,

27-521, and

27-553,

The Zoning Ordinance of Prince George's County, Maryland,

being also

SUBTITLE 27. ZONING.

The Prince George's County Code

(1987 Edition, 1988 Supplement,
as amended by CB-120-1989).

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED by the County Council of Prince George's County, Maryland, sitting as the District Council for that part of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Prince George's County, Maryland, that Sections 27-107.1, 27-274, 27-518, 27-521, and 27-553 of the Zoning Ordinance of Prince George's County, Maryland, being also Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code, be and the same are hereby repealed and reenacted with the following amendments:

SUBTITLE 27. ZONING.

PART 2. GENERAL.

DIVISION 1. DEFINITIONS.

Sec. 27-107.1. Definitions.

(a) Terms in the Zoning Ordinance are defined as follows:

* * * * *

(226.1) Street Furniture: Elements of the streetscape, whether freestanding or fixed, generally associated with amenities for pedestrians, that occupy a place on the sidewalk, on a plaza, or in another type of pedestrian area. Street furniture includes, but is not limited to, benches and other forms of seating, planters, kiosks, signage, lighting fixtures, shelters, and waste disposal containers.

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PART 3. ADMINISTRATION.

DIVISION 9. SITE PLANS.

Subdivision 2. Requirements for Conceptual Site Plans.

Sec. 27-274. [Site d]Design guidelines.

(a) The Conceptual Site Plan shall be designed in accordance with the following guidelines:

(1) General

(A) The Plan should promote the purposes of the Conceptual Site Plan.

(2) Parking, loading, and circulation

(A) [All facilities on the site should be easily accessible to potential uses. Conflicts between pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation, and loading areas should be eliminated.] Surface parking lots should be located and designed to provide safe and efficient vehicular and pedestrian circulation within the site, while minimizing the visual impact of cars. Parking spaces should be located to provide convenient access to major destination points on the site. As a means of achieving these objectives, the following [methods should be incorporated to the degree possible] guidelines should be observed:

[(i) Separate pedestrian from vehicular circulation;

(ii) Avoid large expanses of parking by providing features which break the parking lot into smaller components;

(iii) Locate parking spaces near the uses they serve;

(iv) Separate parking spaces from loading areas;

(v) Design parking lots so that they will not be

used as through-access drives;

(vi) Hold curb cuts to a minimum along access drives and streets;

(vii) Separate employee parking from visitor parking where possible; and

(viii) Design pedestrian circulation to be free of barriers to the handicapped.]

(i) Parking lots should generally be provided to the rear or sides of structures;

(ii) Parking spaces should be located as near as possible to the uses they serve;

(iii) Parking aisles should be oriented to minimize the number of parking lanes crossed by pedestrians;

(iv) Large, uninterrupted expanses of pavement should be avoided or substantially mitigated by the location of green space and plant materials within the parking lot, in accordance with the Landscape Manual; and

(v) Special areas for van pool, car pool, and visitor parking should be located with convenient pedestrian access to buildings.

(B) Loading areas should be visually unobtrusive and located to minimize conflicts with vehicles or pedestrians. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) Loading docks should be oriented toward service roads and away from major streets or public view; and

(ii) Loading areas should be clearly marked and

should be separated from parking areas to the extent possible.

(C) Vehicular and pedestrian circulation on a site should be safe, efficient, and convenient for both pedestrians and drivers. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) The location, number and design of driveway entrances to the site should minimize conflict with off-site traffic, should provide a safe transition into the parking lot, and should provide adequate acceleration and deceleration lanes, if necessary;

(ii) Entrance drives should provide adequate space for queuing;

(iii) Circulation patterns should be designed so that vehicular traffic may flow freely through the parking lot without encouraging higher speeds than can be safely accommodated;

(iv) Parking areas should be designed to discourage their use as through-access drives;

(v) Internal signs such as directional arrows, lane markings, and other roadway commands should be used to facilitate safe driving through the parking lot;

(vi) Drive-through establishments should be designed with adequate space for queuing lanes that do not conflict with circulation traffic patterns or pedestrian access;

(vii) Parcel pick-up areas should be coordinated with other on-site traffic flows;

(viii) Pedestrian access should be provided into

the site and through parking lots to the major destinations on the site;

(ix) Pedestrian and vehicular circulation routes should generally be separated and clearly marked;

(x) Crosswalks for pedestrians that span vehicular lanes should be identified by the use of signs, stripes on the pavement, change of paving material, or similar techniques; and

(xi) Barrier-free pathways to accommodate the handicapped should be provided.

[(3) Open space character

(A) The design shall be compatible with the surrounding area, and shall provide open space in keeping with the character of the proposed development and the zone it is in by incorporating such methods as:

(i) Preserving irreplaceable natural features of the site;

(ii) Setting buildings back from streets to provide an open space appearance;

(iii) Using plant materials to define space, provide screening, delineate views, and provide visual relief;

(iv) Providing a variety of grades and grading techniques, such as mounding, gentle slopes, level areas, berms, and other features.

(4) Green area, views, street furniture

(A) The design should take into account the existing situation, and provide safe and useful outdoor spaces by

incorporating the following methods to the degree possible:

- (i) Provide variety in the type, shape, and edges of green area;
- (ii) Design green areas as connections between buildings, parking, and other uses of the site;
- (iii) Design green area to maximize its utility;
- (iv) Design off-site views to emphasize the character of the development;
- (v) Minimize views of loading and waste collection areas from access and interior drives, and adjacent properties;
- (vi) Unify the design of signs, lamps, standards, litter receptacles, benches, and other street/landscape furniture to help identify the development as a unit.]

(3) Lighting

(A) For uses permitting nighttime activities, adequate illumination should be provided. Light fixtures should enhance the site's design character. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) If the development is used at night, the luminosity, orientation, and location of exterior light fixtures should enhance user safety and minimize vehicular/pedestrian conflicts;

(ii) Lighting should be used to illuminate important on-site elements such as entrances, pedestrian pathways, public spaces, and property addresses. Significant natural or built

features may also be illuminated if appropriate to the site;

(iii) The pattern of light pooling should be directed on-site;

(iv) Light fixtures fulfilling similar functions should provide a consistent quality of light;

(v) Light fixtures should be durable and compatible with the scale, architecture, and use of the site; and

(vi) If a variety of lighting fixtures is needed to serve different purposes on a site, related fixtures should be selected. The design and layout of the fixtures should provide visual continuity throughout the site.

(4) Views

(A) Site design techniques should be used to preserve, create, or emphasize scenic views from public areas.

(5) Green area

(A) On-site green area should be designed to complement other site activity areas and should be appropriate in size, shape, location, and design to fulfill its intended use. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) Green area should be easily accessible in order to maximize its utility and to simplify its maintenance;

(ii) Green area should link major site destinations such as buildings and parking areas;

(iii) Green area should be well-defined and appropriately scaled to meet its intended use;

(iv) Green area designed for the use and

enjoyment of pedestrians should be visible and accessible, and the location of seating should be protected from excessive sun, shade, wind, and noise;

(v) Green area should be designed to define space, provide screening and privacy, and serve as a focal point;

(vi) Green area should incorporate significant on-site natural features and woodland conservation requirements that enhance the physical and visual character of the site; and

(vii) Green area should generally be accented by elements such as landscaping, pools, fountains, street furniture, and decorative paving.

(6) Site and streetscape amenities

(A) Site and streetscape amenities should contribute to an attractive, coordinated development and should enhance the use and enjoyment of the site. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) The design of light fixtures, benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks and other street furniture should be coordinated in order to enhance the visual unity of the site;

(ii) The design of amenities should take into consideration the color, pattern, texture, and scale of structures on the site, and when known, structures on adjacent sites, and pedestrian areas;

(iii) Amenities should be clearly visible and accessible, and should not obstruct pedestrian circulation;

(iv) Amenities should be functional and should be constructed of durable, low maintenance materials;

(v) Amenities should be protected from vehicular intrusion with design elements that are integrated into the overall streetscape design, such as landscaping, curbs, and bollards;

(vi) Amenities such as kiosks, planters, fountains, and public art should be used as focal points on a site; and

(vii) Amenities should be included which accommodate the handicapped and should be appropriately scaled for user comfort.

(7) Grading

(A) Grading should be performed to minimize disruption to existing topography and other natural and cultural resources on the site and on adjacent sites. To the extent practicable, grading should minimize environmental impacts. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) Slopes and berms visible from streets and other public areas should appear as naturalistic forms. Slope ratios and the length of slopes should be varied if necessary to increase visual interest and relate manmade landforms to the shape of the natural terrain;

(ii) Excessive grading of hilltops and slopes should be avoided where there are reasonable alternatives that will preserve a site's natural landforms;

(iii) Grading and other methods should be

considered to buffer incompatible land uses from each other;

(iv) Where steep slopes cannot be avoided, plant materials of varying forms and densities should be arranged to soften the appearance of the slope; and

(v) Drainage devices should be located and designed so as to minimize the view from public areas.

(8) Service areas

(A) Service areas should be accessible, but unobtrusive. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) Service areas should be located away from primary roads, when possible;

(ii) Service areas should be located conveniently to all buildings served;

(iii) Service areas should be effectively screened or enclosed with materials compatible with the primary structure; and

(iv) Multiple building developments should be designed to form service courtyards which are devoted to parking and loading uses and are not visible from public view.

(9) Public Spaces

(A) A public space system should be provided to enhance a large-scale commercial, mixed-use, or multifamily development. To fulfill this goal, the following guidelines should be observed:

(i) Buildings should be organized and designed to create public spaces such as plazas, squares, courtyards, pedestrian malls, or other defined spaces;

(ii) The scale, size, shape, and circulation patterns of the public spaces should be designed to accommodate various activities;

(iii) Public spaces should generally incorporate sitting areas, landscaping, access to the sun, and protection from the wind;

(iv) Public spaces should be readily accessible to potential users; and

(v) Pedestrian pathways should be provided to connect major uses and public spaces within the development and should be scaled for anticipated circulation.

[(5)] (10) Architecture

(A) When architectural considerations are referenced for review, the Conceptual Site Plan should include a statement as to how the architecture of the buildings will provide a variety of building forms, with a unified, harmonious use of materials and styles.

PART 8. COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN ZONES.

DIVISION 4. COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN PLANS AND SPECIFIC DESIGN PLANS.

Subdivision 1. Comprehensive Design Plans.

Sec. 27-518. Contents of Plan.

* * * * *

(b) The Comprehensive Design Plan shall consist of the following:

* * * * *

(3) A description of design principles proposed to govern the project, including design guidelines set forth in Section 27-274 of Part 3, Division 9, of this Subtitle;

* * * * *

Sec. 27-521. Required findings for approval.

(a) Prior to approving a Comprehensive Design Plan, the Planning Board shall find that:

* * * * *

(7) The staging of development will not be an unreasonable burden on available public facilities; [and]

(8) Where a Comprehensive Design Plan proposal includes an adaptive use of a Historic Site, the Planning Board shall find that:

(A) The proposed adaptive use will not adversely affect distinguishing exterior architectural features or important historic landscape features in the established environmental setting;

(B) Parking lot layout, materials, and landscaping are designed to preserve the integrity and character of the Historic Site;

(C) The design, materials, height, proportion, and scale of a proposed enlargement or extension of a Historic Site, or

of a new structure within the environmental setting, are in keeping with the character of the Historic Site[.]; and

(9) The Plan incorporates the applicable design guidelines set forth in Section 27-274 of Part 3, Division 9, of this Subtitle.

PART 11. OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING.

DIVISION 2. PARKING FACILITIES.

Subdivision 1. Site Plan.

Sec. 27-553. Guidelines for approval.

(a) The following guidelines apply to evaluation of the site plan:

(1) The plan should compl[ies]y with the purposes of this Part and Subtitle, and the General Plan;

[(2) The impact of vehicular traffic (entering and leaving the parking lot) upon streets is minimized, and the number and locations of points of access are controlled;

(3) Pedestrian movement within the parking lot to the use it serves, and to other pedestrian areas, is facilitated;

(4)] (2) The amenity and convenience of the parking lot [is] should be enhanced by landscaping, [the provision of pedestrian spaces,] screening, and similar means[;] which conform to the requirements set forth in the Landscape Manual;

[(5) The safety and efficiency of vehicular circulation within the parking lot is maximized; and]

[(6)] (3) The parking lot [is] should be compatible with

the surrounding area[.]; and

(4) The parking lot should conform to the design guidelines set forth in Section 27-274 of Part 3, Division 9, of this Subtitle.

SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Ordinance shall take effect forty-five (45) calendar days after the date of its adoption.

Adopted this 12th day of June, 1990.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S
COUNTY, MARYLAND, SITTING AS THE
DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PART OF
THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL
DISTRICT IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY,
MARYLAND

EFFECTIVE: JULY 30, 1990

BY: _____

Jo Ann T. Bell
Chairman

ATTEST:

Jean M. Schmuhl, CMC
Clerk of the Council

KEY:

Underscoring indicates language added to existing law.
[Brackets] indicate language deleted from existing law.
Asterisks *** indicate intervening existing Code provisions that remain unchanged.