



**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**  
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

**DATE:** December 10, 2020

**TO:** Andree Green Checkley, ESQ., Planning Director

**VIA:** Henry Zhang, Co-Chair, Alternative Compliance Committee  
Jill Kosack, Co-Chair, Alternative Compliance Committee

**FROM:** Thomas Burke, Alternative Compliance Committee Member

**PROJECT NAME:** Word Power Baptist Tabernacle

**PROJECT NUMBER:** Alternative Compliance AC-20017

**COMPANION CASE:** Special Exception SE-4694

**ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE**

**Recommendation:**   X   Approval        Denial

**Justification:** SEE ATTACHED

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer's Signature

Thomas Burke

*Thomas Burke*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer's Signature

**PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REVIEW**

       Final Decision        Approval        Denial

  X   Recommendation   X   Approval        Denial

       To Planning Board

  X   To Zoning Hearing Examiner

Planning Director's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPEAL OF PLANNING DIRECTOR'S DECISION**

**Appeal Filed:**

**Planning Board Hearing Date:**

**Planning Board**  
**Decision:**                    \_\_\_\_\_ **Approval**                    \_\_\_\_\_ **Denial**

**Resolution Number:**

Alternative Compliance: AC-20017  
Name of Project: Word Power Baptist Tabernacle  
Companion Case: Special Exception SE-4694  
Date: December 10, 2020

This alternative compliance application is a companion case to Special Exception SE-4694, which proposes an approximately 2,230-square-foot addition to an existing church in the Multifamily Medium Density Residential Zone. Alternative compliance is requested from the requirements of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual* (Landscape Manual) for Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, specifically for the site's eastern boundary where the subject site is adjacent to an existing multifamily residential use.

### **Location**

This 0.65-acre site is on the south side of MD 725 (Marlboro Pike Road), in Planning Area 75A and Council District 7. The site is also within the geography previously designated as the Developed Tier, and reflected on Attachment H(5) of the 2014 *Plan Prince George's 2035 Approved General Plan*, as found in Prince George's County Planning Board Resolution No. 14-10 (see District Council Resolution CR-26-2014, Revision No. 31).

### **Background**

The applicant has requested to provide an alternative design to conform with the requirements of Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual, for buffering incompatible uses along the site's eastern boundary line. The proposed addition to the existing church will be on the west side of the building, where the property adjoins a metal fabrication business, and the applicant is able to meet all the other applicable Landscape Manual requirements.

### **Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses**

The Landscape Manual regards churches as a medium-impact use. The adjoining property to the east is a multifamily residential use. In accordance with Section 4.7, a Type B bufferyard between the two uses is required. The Type B bufferyard includes a 30-foot building setback and a minimum 20-foot-wide landscape yard to be planted with 80 plant units per 100 linear feet of property line. The landscape plan shows a Section 4.7 bufferyard provided as follows:

#### **REQUIRED: Section 4.7-1 Buffering Incompatible Uses (eastern property line)**

Minimum building setback	30 feet
Minimum width of landscape yard	20 feet
Linear feet of buffer	185 feet
Plant units required	148

#### **PROVIDED: Section 4.7-1 Buffering Incompatible Uses (eastern property line)**

Average building setback	46 feet
Width of landscape yard	Variable 0 feet to 20 feet
Linear feet of buffer	185 feet
Fence or Wall	Yes
Plant units provided	89

**Justification of Recommendation**

In the statement of justification provided with this application, the applicant has provided circumstances unique to the proposed church's addition on this site that warrant consideration for alternative compliance. The proposed addition will be located on the west side of the existing church, and no site improvement is proposed on the east side of the site; however, the proposed addition requires that the entire site conforms to the Landscape Manual. The alternative compliance requested is for the eastern bufferyard only, where the site layout will remain unchanged.

The Landscape Manual allows for the setback and landscape yard to be reduced by up to 50 percent for properties located in the Developed Tier, if a six-foot-high, opaque fence or wall is located within the bufferyard, provided the adjoining use is not existing residential. In this case, the adjoining use is a residential multifamily building, so this reduction does not apply; however, the applicant is providing a six-foot-high opaque fence to be considered with this alternative compliance toward a reduction in the required plant units.

The bufferyard provided by the applicant along the eastern boundary varies in width from 0 feet to 20 feet, and the building setback of an average of 46 feet exceeds the required 30 feet. In addition to providing an opaque six-foot-high fence along the eastern property line, the applicant is proposing 89 planting units within the bufferyard. The proposed opaque fence will significantly minimize the site's negative impacts on the adjoining multifamily residential use.

The Alternative Compliance Committee finds that the applicant's proposal is equally effective as full compliance with Section 4.7 of the Landscape Manual, given the existing conditions of the eastern side of the site that predates the Landscape Manual. The provision of the proposed plant units in combination with the installation of a six-foot-high opaque fence, and overall planting layout provides for equally effective buffering of the adjacent incompatible uses.

**Recommendation**

The Alternative Compliance Committee recommends APPROVAL of Alternative Compliance AC-20017 for Word Power Baptist Tabernacle from the requirements of Section 4.7, Buffering Incompatible Uses, of the 2010 *Prince George's County Landscape Manual*, for the site's eastern property line.