

## Memorandum

**TO:** Roland Driest, DC Surveyor  
Matthew LeGrant, Zoning Administrator  
*JLS*

**FROM:** Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director, Development Review & Historic Preservation

**DATE:** January 6, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Office of Planning Report for Large Tract Review Case No. 2016-02  
**Square 4268 – 1830 Bladensburg Road, N.E.**

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### I. SUMMARY

On **September 13, 2016**, Douglas Development submitted and the Office of Planning accepted an application for Large Tract Review (LTR) for the development of Square 4268. The applicant proposes a mixed-use development of nine buildings on the 707,000 square foot land area, including a new private street and lane consistent with the surrounding street pattern.

Section 2300.1 (a) of Title 10 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) directs the Office of Planning to “Review, prior to the filing of applications for building permits or construction permits, (for) ... any commercial or mixed-use commercial development of fifty-thousand square feet (50,000 square feet) or more gross floor area (above grade) and cellar area (below grade); ...”. This otherwise by-right development proposal is subject to Large Tract Review because it is a mixed-use commercial/residential development of more than 50,000 square feet and it is located within the MU-5-B District (ZR-58 = C-2-B-1).

The Office of Planning (OP) has completed its review of the LTR application and concludes that, for the reasons outlined in this report, the application addresses the goals of the LTR regulations, as outlined in DCMR Title 10, Chapter 23, § 2300.2:

- To minimize adverse environmental, traffic, and neighborhood impacts;
- To avoid unnecessary public costs in terms of new services or facilities required of city agencies;
- To carry out the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

**II. LOCATION and SITE DESCRIPTION**

Address	1830 Bladensburg Road, N.E.
Applicant:	Jemal’s Shaeffer’s LLC
Legal Description	Square 4268, Lots 2,5,6,8,10,11,12,14,800,801,804,811,815 and Parcels: 153/26,153/83,153/105,153/113,153/123/153/120,153/152 and 153/153
Ward / ANC	Ward 5; ANC 5C
Zone	MU-5-B
Historic District or Resource	Not Applicable
Lot Characteristics	The large triangular lot is comprised of eight record lots, five tax lots and eight parcels. The site slopes considerably upwards by 40 feet from north to south.
Existing Development	The former industrial parcel is currently vacant and fenced.
Previous Development Application Reviews:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PUD 06-15 was approved by the Zoning Commission for a former owner in 2007 for a high density mixed use development with over 3,400 residential units and almost 150,000 sq.ft. of retail. That PUD approval has expired.</li> <li>• PUD 09-06 was considered by the Zoning Commission for a former owner for a lower density mixed use development with approximately 1,400 residential units and 70,000 sq.ft. of retail. That PUD was eventually dismissed.</li> <li>• Large Tract Review 2011-02, also for a former owner, was reviewed in 2011 for a development conforming to the then CM-1 (moderate density industrial) zone, for a mainly retail development with above grade parking.</li> <li>• Map Amendment 14-16 was approved by the Zoning Commission in 2015, to create a new C-2-B-1 zone (MU-5-B in ZR-16) and to rezone this site from CM-1 to C-2-B-1.</li> </ul>
Adjacent Properties	The property is bounded by a major arterial, New York Avenue to the north, a minor arterial in Bladensburg Avenue to the east and a charter school and a commercial fast food restaurant, which fronts on Bladensburg Road and Montana Avenue to the west.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	The property is located within the Arboretum neighborhood. Across Bladensburg Road are two hotels, a gas station, a limousine company, the Arboretum Place neighborhood, and a branch of the Metropolitan Police Department. Across Montana Avenue are a variety of industrial uses including a storage company, other warehouse type uses and property occupied by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). Across New York Avenue is a childcare use, a medical office, office of the Salvation Army, fast food and gas station uses. The site is within walking distance of the National Arboretum.

### III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property would be developed on a single lot of record with nine new buildings, which will collectively provide approximately 1,100,395 square feet of gross floor area, not including parking or loading. Approximately 543,956 square feet of gross floor area will be devoted to residential use of 652 multi-family units and 18 row dwellings. Retail and service uses would occupy approximately 408,989 square feet of gross floor area with a 160-key hotel and entertainment/movie theatre use occupying a total of approximately 147,450 square feet of gross floor area. The remaining gross floor area will be devoted to parking and loading. The buildings would be developed with the following uses and parameters as follows:

1. **Building 1** - Frontage on New York Avenue and Montana Avenue, with 220 residential units, 217,097 square feet of retail use, 1,798 parking spaces, and below-grade loading facilities, and utility infrastructure to serve loading needs for all nine buildings; Maximum height - 74 feet.
2. **Building 2** - East of Building 1, with frontage on New York Avenue and the private T Place, would accommodate up to 4,100 square feet of retail use and 160 hotel rooms. Maximum height - 58.5 feet.
3. **Building 3** - Frontage on Bladensburg Road and T Place, NE, with 60 residential units and up to 12,916 square feet of retail use. Maximum height - 68.5 feet.
4. **Building 4** - Montana Avenue frontage, with 135 residential units and up to 33,894 square feet of retail use. Maximum height - 74.5 feet.
5. **Building 5** - Frontage on the new T Place N.E. (interior to the site), with up to 8,035 square feet of retail space. Maximum height - 20.5 feet.
6. **Building 6** – Frontage on T Place NE, east of Building 5, with up to 43,030 square feet of retail; Maximum height - 60 feet.
7. **Building 7** - Frontage on T Place NE, east of Building 6, with up to 46,394 square feet of retail; Maximum height - 60 feet.
8. **Building 8** - Frontage on Bladensburg Road, east of Building 7, with 153 residential units and approximately 31,813 square feet of retail use. Maximum height - 68.5 feet.
9. **Building 9** - Frontage on Bladensburg Road and Montana Avenue, with 102 residential units, approximately 200 parking spaces, approximately 11,710 square feet of retail use, and 50,618 square feet of entertainment use. Maximum height - 66.5 feet.



Site Plan at Plaza Level

The site layout is designed around a large public plaza and emphasizes the public realm through the creation of pedestrian-friendly open spaces, pocket parks, and public amenities, to animate the development and create natural connections between the individual buildings. The proposed landscape design is intended to activate the streets and enhance the quality of the natural environment. The proposed new east-west private street (T Place NE) in the center of

the subject property would connect Bladensburg Road to Montana Avenue. A north-south private lane is proposed to connect T Place to New York Avenue to the north. As a result, the project would extend the existing street system to create new connections between three important pedestrian and vehicular corridors.

The application is consistent with the type and scale of development permitted under the MU-5-B District Regulations. A summary of the project against the existing Regulations is provided as follows:

Item	MU-5-B Regulations	Proposed
Height	75 feet	75 feet maximum
FAR		
Residential	4.2 (with IZ)	0.96
Commercial	1.5	1.17
Lot Occupancy	80%	
<b>Max SF</b>	<b>2,969,400 sq.ft.</b>	<b>1,100,395 sq.ft. GFA</b>
Retail and Service		408,989 sq.ft.
Hotel		96,832 sq.ft. (160 keys)
Entertainment		50,618 sq.ft.
Residential		543,956 sf (650 units 18 row units)
Parking	879	2046
Loading	16 loading berths 7 service delivery spaces	35 loading berths (Shared) 8 service delivery spaces

Table 1

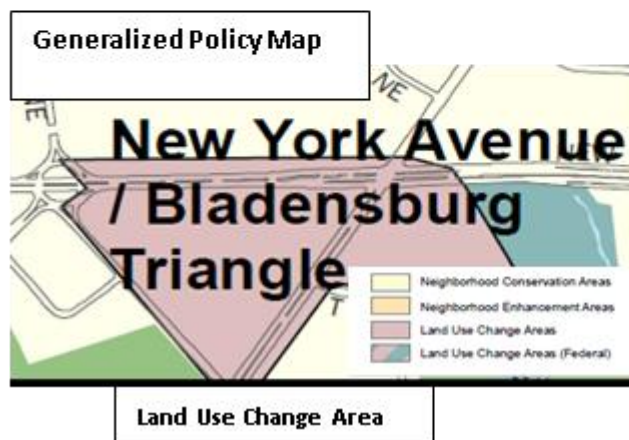
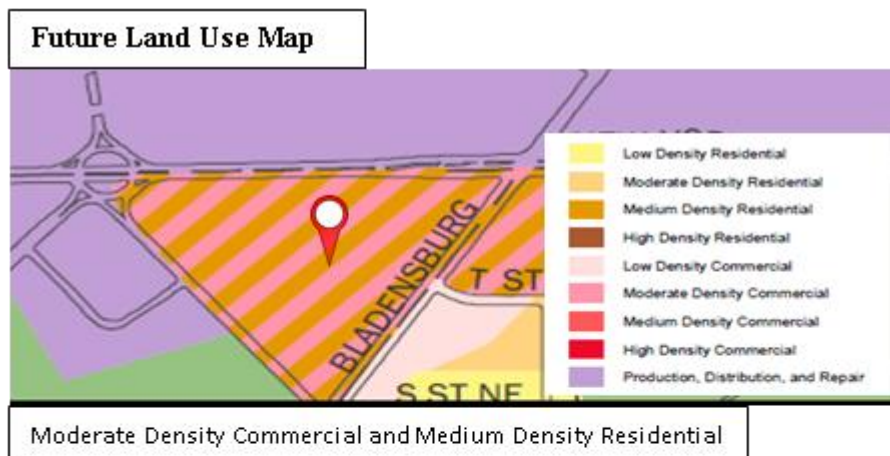
Building	Building Area (square feet)	Theoretical Lot Area (sq. feet)	FAR	Use
Lot 1	750,703	359,643	2.08	Large & mid-format retail; 4-level garage, residential
Lot 2	10,932	34,194	2.98	5-story, 160 room hotel
Lot 3	74,260	21,900	2.49	5-story residential, retail
Lot 4	148,653	57,764	2.58	6-story residential, retail, restaurant
Lot 5	8,035	15,120	0.5	1-story restaurant
Lot 6	43,030	30,091	1.4	2-story restaurant and retail
Lot 7	46,394	33,910	1.37	2-story restaurant, retail
Lot 8	161,364	55,827	2.89	6-story residential, restaurant, retail
Lot 9	183,660	90,009	2.0	6-story restaurant, movie theatre, 2-level parking garage.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,100,395</b>		<b>2.13</b>	

Table 2

#### IV. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designates the property within a mixed land use category of Moderate Density Commercial and Medium Density Residential. The approved map amendment to the MU-5-B District and the density proposed are not inconsistent with this designation, as mixed-use developments are permitted and encouraged in most commercial areas. Retail, office and service businesses would be the predominant commercial uses proposed for the development.

The Generalized Policy Map classifies the site as a Land Use Change Area. These areas are where change to a different land use from what exists today is anticipated and they represent much of the city’s supply of vacant and underutilized land.



The proposed development would not be inconsistent with either the Future Land Use Map or the Generalized Policy Map designations.

The project would also further several policy statements of the Comprehensive Plan’s Land Use, Transportation, Housing, Environment, Economic Development , and Urban Design Elements:

## **Land Use:**

- *LU-1.2.2: Mix of Uses on Large Sites* - to ensure that the mix of new uses on large redeveloped sites is compatible with adjacent uses and provides benefit to surrounding neighborhoods and to the city as a whole. 305.7
- *LU-1.2.6: New Neighborhoods and the Urban Fabric* – when large sites are redeveloped as new neighborhoods they should be integrated as new development into the fabric of the city to the greatest extent feasible. Incorporate extensions of the city street grid, public access and circulation improvements, new public open spaces, and building intensities and massing that complement adjacent developed areas. Such sites should not be developed as self-contained communities, isolated or gated from their surroundings. 305.11
- *LU-1.4.1: Infill Development:* Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern. 307.5
- *LU-1.4.2: Long-Term Vacant Sites:* Facilitate the reuse of vacant lots that have historically been difficult to develop due to infrastructure or access problems, inadequate lot dimensions, fragmented or absentee ownership, or other constraints. Explore lot consolidation, acquisition, and other measures, which would address these constraints. 307.6
- *LU-2.3.2: Mitigation of Commercial Development Impacts:* Manage new commercial development so that it does not result in unreasonable and unexpected traffic, parking, litter, shadow, view obstruction, odor, noise, and vibration impacts on surrounding residential areas. Before commercial development is approved, establish requirements for traffic and noise control, parking and loading management, building design, hours of operation, and other measures as needed to avoid such adverse effects. 311.4
- *LU-2.4.5: Encouraging Nodal Development:* Discourage auto-oriented commercial “strip” development and instead encourage pedestrian-oriented “nodes” of commercial development at key locations along major corridors. Zoning and design standards should ensure that the height, mass, and scale of development within nodes respects the integrity and character of surrounding residential areas and does not unreasonably impact them. 312.9
- *LU-2.4.6: Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses:* Ensure that new uses within commercial districts are developed at a height, mass, scale and design that is appropriate and compatible with surrounding areas. 312.10

## **Transportation**

*Goal: Create a safe, sustainable, efficient multi-modal transportation system that meets the access and mobility needs of District residents, the regional workforce, and visitors; supports local and regional economic prosperity; and enhances the quality of life for District residents.* 401.1

- *T-1.2 Transforming Corridors* .Different corridors in the city serve different functions. Some, like New York Avenue, carry heavy truck and commuter traffic....As the gateways to our communities, the District’s corridors should once again become the centers of civic and economic life for surrounding neighborhoods and serve as vital transportation corridors. The challenge facing the District as it plans for and reinvests in its corridors is to balance the various transportation modes, tailor its transportation strategies to recognize the function of each major street, and foster economic growth. 404.2
- *T-1.2.3: Discouraging Auto-Oriented Uses-* Discourage certain uses, like “drive-through” businesses or stores with large surface parking lots, along key boulevards and pedestrian streets, and minimize the number of curb cuts in new developments. Curb cuts and multiple vehicle access points break-up the sidewalk, reduce pedestrian safety, and detract from pedestrian-oriented retail and residential areas. 404.8

- *T-2.3.1: Better Integration of Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning:* Integrate bicycle and pedestrian planning and safety considerations more fully into the planning and design of District roads, transit facilities, public buildings, and parks. 409.8
- *T-2.3.2: Bicycle Network:* Provide and maintain a safe, direct, and comprehensive bicycle network connecting neighborhoods, employment locations, public facilities, transit stations, parks and other key destinations. Eliminate system gaps to provide continuous bicycle facilities. Increase dedicated bike-use infrastructure, such as bike-sharing programs like Capital Bikeshare, and identify bike boulevards or bike-only rights of way. 409.9
- *T-2.3.3: Bicycle Safety:* Increase bicycle safety through traffic calming measures, provision of public bicycle parking, enforcement of regulations requiring private bicycle parking, and improving bicycle access where barriers to bicycle travel now exist. 409.10
- *T-2.4 Pedestrian Access, Facilities, and Safety-* Improvements to pedestrian facilities can enhance the quality of the walking and public transit environments, and foster greater use of both modes. Improvements should focus on reductions in the number and severity of pedestrian-vehicle conflict points, clarified pedestrian routing, widened sidewalks, and improved aesthetic features such as landscaping. 410.3
- *T-2.4.1: Pedestrian Network:* Develop, maintain, and improve pedestrian facilities. Improve the city's sidewalk system to form a network that links residents across the city. 410.5
- *T-3.1.3: Car-Sharing:* Encourage the expansion of car-sharing services as an alternative to private vehicle ownership. 414.10

## **Housing**

*Goal: Develop and maintain a safe, decent, and affordable supply of housing for all current and future residents of the District of Columbia.* 501.1

- *H-1.1 Expanding Housing Supply:* Expanding the housing supply is a key part of the District's vision to create successful neighborhoods...
- *H-1.1.1: Private Sector Support:* Encourage the private sector to provide new housing to meet the needs of present and future District residents at locations consistent with District land use policies and objectives. 503.2
- *H-1.1.4: Mixed Use Development:* Promote mixed use development, including housing, on commercially zoned land... 503.5
- *H-1.2.3: Mixed Income Housing Focus* investment strategies and affordable housing programs to distribute mixed income housing more equitably across the entire city, taking steps to avoid further concentration of poverty within areas of the city that already have substantial affordable housing. 504.8

## **Environment**

*Goal: Protect, restore, and enhance the natural and man-made environment in the District of Columbia, taking steps to improve environmental quality, prevent and reduce pollution, and conserve the values and functions of the District's natural resources and ecosystems.* 601.1

- *E-1.1.1: Street Tree Planting and Maintenance:* Plant and maintain street trees in all parts of the city, particularly in areas where existing tree cover has been reduced over the last 30 years. Recognize the importance of trees in providing shade, reducing energy costs, improving air and water quality, providing urban habitat, absorbing noise, and creating economic and aesthetic value in the District's neighborhoods. 603.4
- *E-1.1.2: Tree Requirements in New Development:* Use planning, zoning, and building regulations to ensure that trees are retained and planted when new development occurs, and that dying trees are removed and replaced. If tree planting and landscaping are required as a condition of permit approval, also require provisions for ongoing maintenance. 603.5



- *E-1.1.3: Landscaping:* Encourage the use of landscaping to beautify the city, enhance streets and public spaces, reduce stormwater runoff, and create a stronger sense of character and identity. 603.6
- *E-2.2.1: Energy Efficiency:* Promote the efficient use of energy, additional use of renewable energy, and a reduction of unnecessary energy expenses. The overarching objective should be to achieve reductions in per capita energy consumption by DC residents and employees. 610.3 are they doing this somehow?
- *E-2.2.4: Alternative Energy Sources:* A key goal is the continued availability and access to unobstructed, direct sunlight for distributed-energy generators and passive-solar homes relying on the sun as a primary energy source. 610.6 are they doing this somehow?
- *E-3.1.1: Maximizing Permeable Surfaces:* Encourage the use of permeable materials for parking lots, driveways, walkways, and other paved surfaces as a way to absorb stormwater and reduce urban runoff. 613.2
- *E-3.1.2: Using Landscaping and Green Roofs to Reduce Runoff:* Promote an increase in tree planting and landscaping to reduce stormwater runoff, including the expanded use of green roofs in new construction and adaptive reuse, and the application of tree and landscaping standards for parking lots and other large paved surfaces. 613.3
- *E-3.1.3: Green Engineering:* Promote green engineering practices for water and wastewater systems. These practices include design techniques, operational methods, and technology to reduce environmental damage and the toxicity of waste generated. 613.4

## **Economic Development**

- *ED-1.1.5: Use of Large Sites* Plan strategically for the District’s remaining large development sites to ensure that their economic development potential is fully realized. These sites should be viewed as assets that can be used to revitalize neighborhoods and diversify the District economy over the long term. Sites with Metrorail access, planned light rail access, and highway access should be viewed as opportunities for new jobs and not exclusively as housing sites. 703.13
- *ED-2.2.3: Neighborhood Shopping* Create additional shopping opportunities in Washington’s neighborhood commercial districts to better meet the demand for basic goods and services. Reuse of vacant buildings in these districts should be encouraged, along with appropriately-scaled retail infill development on vacant and underutilized sites. Promote the creation of locally-owned, non-chain establishments because of their role in creating unique shopping experiences. 708.7
- *ED-2.2.4: Destination Retailing* Continue to encourage “destination” retail districts that specialize in unique goods and services, such as furniture districts, arts districts, high-end specialty shopping districts, and wholesale markets. Support the creative efforts of local entrepreneurs who seek to enhance the District’s destination retailing base. 708.8
- *ED-2.2.5: Business Mix* Reinforce existing and encourage new retail districts by attracting a mix of nationally-recognized chains as well as locally-based chains and smaller specialty stores to the city’s shopping districts. 708.9
- *ED-2.2.6: Grocery Stores and Supermarkets* Promote the development of new grocery stores and supermarkets, particularly in neighborhoods where residents currently travel long distances for food and other shopping services. .. 708.10
- *ED-2.3.4: Lodging and Accommodation* Support the development of a diverse range of hotel types, serving travelers with varying needs, tastes, and budgets. New hotels should be encouraged both within Central Washington and in outlying commercial areas of the city, particularly in areas which presently lack quality accommodation. 709.8



- *ED-3.1.1: Neighborhood Commercial Vitality* Promote the vitality and diversity of Washington’s neighborhood commercial areas by retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and improving the mix of goods and services available to residents. 713.5

## Urban Design

*Goal: Enhance the beauty and livability of the city by protecting its historic design legacy, reinforcing the identity of its neighborhoods, harmoniously integrating new construction with existing buildings and the natural environment, and improving the vitality, appearance, and security of streets and public spaces.* 901.1

- *UD-1.4.1: Avenues/Boulevards and Urban Form* Use Washington’s major avenues/boulevards as a way to reinforce the form and identity of the city, connect its neighborhoods, and improve its aesthetic and visual character. Focus improvement efforts on avenues/ boulevards in emerging neighborhoods, particularly those that provide important gateways or view corridors within the city. 906.6
- *UD-1.5.2: Major Arterials* Reduce the barrier effects created by major arterials (such as New York Avenue and South Capitol Street) through improved signal timing, traffic calming, mid-crossing medians, and other design improvements that improve aesthetics and enhance safety at pedestrian crossings. 907.4
- *UD-2.2.1: Neighborhood Character and Identity:* Strengthen the defining visual qualities of Washington’s neighborhoods. This should be achieved in part by relating the scale of infill development, alterations, renovations, and additions to existing neighborhood context. 910.6
- *UD-2.2.3: Neighborhood Centers:* Undertake strategic and coordinated efforts to create neighborhood centers, civic buildings, and shopping places that reinforce community identity (see Figure 9.11). 910.9
- *UD-2.2.5: Creating Attractive Facades:* Create visual interest through well-designed building facades, storefront windows, and attractive signage and lighting. Avoid monolithic or box-like building forms, or long blank walls which detract from the human quality of the street. 910.12
- *UD-2.2.7: Infill Development:* Regardless of neighborhood identity, avoid overpowering contrasts of scale, height and density as infill development occurs. 910.15
- *UD-2.2.8: Large Site Development:* Ensure that new developments on parcels that are larger than the prevailing neighborhood lot size are carefully integrated with adjacent sites. Structures on such parcels should be broken into smaller, more varied forms, particularly where the prevailing street frontage is characterized by small, older buildings with varying facades. (see Figure 9.13). 910.16
- *UD-2.3.1: Reintegrating Large Sites:* Reintegrate large self-contained sites back into the city pattern. Plans for each site should establish urban design goals and principles which guide their subsequent redevelopment. 911.2
- *UD-2.3.2: Large Site Scale and Block Patterns:* Establish a development scale on large sites that is in keeping with surrounding areas. “Superblocks” (e.g., oversized tracts of land with no through-streets) should generally be avoided in favor of a finer-grained street grid that is more compatible with the texture of Washington’s neighborhoods. This also allows for more appropriately scaled development and avoids large internalized complexes or oversized structures 911.4
- *UD-2.3.3: Design Context for Planning Large Sites:* Ensure that urban design plans for large sites consider not only the site itself, but the broader context presented by surrounding neighborhoods. Recognize that the development of large sites has ripple effects that extend beyond their borders, including effects on the design of transportation systems and public facilities nearby. 911.6
- *UD-3.1.2: Management of Sidewalk Space:* ... Sidewalk space should be managed in a way that promotes pedestrian safety, efficiency, comfort, and provides adequate space for tree boxes. Sidewalks should enhance the visual character of streets, with landscaping and buffer planting used to reduce the impacts of vehicle traffic. 913.9

- *UD-3.1.6: Enhanced Streetwalls:* Promote a higher standard of storefront design and architectural detail along the District’s commercial streets. Along walkable shopping streets, create street walls with relatively continuous facades built to the front lot line in order to provide a sense of enclosure and improve pedestrian comfort. 913.13
- *UD-3.1.12: Programming of Outdoor Space:* Encourage the programming of outdoor space with events and activities (such as performances, arts, and farmers markets) that stimulate street life and active use. 913.19
- *UD-3.1.13: Signage:* Encourage high standards of signage throughout the District, particularly for signs that designate landmarks, historic districts, and other areas of civic importance. 913.20
- *UD-3.2.5: Reducing Crime Through Design:* Ensure that the design of the built environment minimizes the potential for criminal activity. Examples of preventive measures include adequate lighting, maintaining clear lines of sight and visual access, and avoiding dead-end streets. 914.10

### **Upper Northeast Area Element**

The proposal would also further more specific policy direction contained in the Upper North East Area Element, including:

#### **Planning and Development Priorities:** (2407 g, h)

The area’s major thoroughfares need to be improved. New York Avenue is the gateway to the Nation’s capital for over 100,000 vehicles a day and provides the first impression of Upper Northeast (and the District of Columbia) for many residents, commuters, and visitors. ... The same is true of Bladensburg Road, and some of the other arterial streets in the area. The community wishes to see these corridors upgraded, without diverting traffic to other thoroughfares and residential streets nearby. ... Upper Northeast did not experience the kind of large-scale development experienced elsewhere in the city ... but... a large mixed use development is also under consideration at the Bladensburg/ New York Avenue intersection.

*UNE-1.1.2: Compatible Infill:* Encourage compatible residential infill development throughout Upper Northeast neighborhoods, especially in Brentwood, Ivy City, and Trinidad, where numerous scattered vacant residentially-zoned properties exist. Such development should be consistent with the designations on the Future Land Use Map. New and rehabilitated housing in these areas should meet the needs of a diverse community that includes renters and owners; seniors, young adults, and families; and persons of low and very low income as well as those of moderate and higher incomes. 2408.3

*UNE-1.1.8: Untapped Economic Development Potential:* Recognize the significant potential of the area’s commercially and industrially-zoned lands, particularly along the New York Avenue corridor, V Street NE, and Bladensburg Road, ... to generate jobs, provide new shopping opportunities, enhance existing businesses, create new business ownership opportunities, and promote the vitality and economic well-being of the Upper Northeast community. .... 2408.9

*UNE-1.2.1: Streetscape Improvements:* Improve the visual quality of streets in Upper Northeast, especially along ...Bladensburg Road. Landscaping, street tree planting, street lighting, and other improvements should make these streets more attractive community gateways. 2409.1

*UNE-1.2.5: Increasing Economic Opportunity:* Create new opportunities for small, local and minority businesses within the Planning Area,... as development takes place along New York Avenue, Bladensburg Road, .... 2409.5

*UNE-1.2.6: Connecting to the River:* .... Improve the connections between Upper Northeast neighborhoods and ... improved access to the National Arboretum.

### **UNE-2 Policy Focus Areas - New York Avenue Corridor and Brentwood**

*UNE-2.2.3: Arboretum Gateway:* Improve the visual quality of Bladensburg Road and enhance its function as a gateway to the National Arboretum. 2412.7.

The corridor faces land use, transportation, and urban design challenges. Some of the industrial uses are considered obsolete by today's market standards and are being considered for new uses such as retail development. Tall pole-mounted signs create a cluttered and unattractive image and poorly designed intersections create traffic hazards. ...

2413.2

*UNE-2.3.1: New York Avenue Corridor:* Improve the appearance of New York Avenue as a gateway to the District of Columbia. Support road design changes, streetscape improvements, and new land uses that improve traffic flow and enhance the road's operation as a multi-modal corridor that meets both regional and local needs. 2413.5

*UNE-2.3.3: Infill Development:* Support in infill development and redevelopment on underutilized commercial sites along New York Avenue. Particularly encourage large-format destination retail development that would provide better access to goods and services for residents, and sales tax dollars for the District. 2413.7

*Action UNE-2.3.D: Business Improvement District:* Consider the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) serving the New York Avenue corridor. 2413.12

In summary, the proposed development would be generally consistent with the written elements, particularly through policies expressed in the land use, economic development, housing and transportation elements. As an infill development on former industrial parcels, the new development would be transformative for Ward 5's entry and its surrounding neighborhoods. New retail and service jobs are anticipated with the number of new businesses, which would also attract DC residents and new customers to the District from the nearby Maryland suburbs. Thus, the long vacant infill site would be put into productive use for the District's benefit.

The proposal will achieve progressive sustainability practices advocated in the Comprehensive Plan. The applicant has agreed to work with DDOE on the feasibility of including a microgrid for the development, as well as renewable energy technology to as part of the District's DC Sustainable Plan. The developer has been encouraged to consider incorporating a significant amount of solar energy, given the expansive roof to help address renewable energy goals.

### **Small Area Plan: Northeast Gateway Revitalization Strategy**

The 2006 Northeast Gateway Revitalization Strategy identified the triangle as a major development opportunity and projects a significant deficit of space for retail, eating and drinking, entertainment and personal services. This project would satisfy the revitalization strategy for this large parcel as it would be transformed to provide a variety of services and entertainment opportunities for residents of Ward 5 and the District as a whole.

## V. Analysis of Compliance with 10 DCMR, Chapter 23, Large Tract Review Procedures

The proposal for the development project is subject to the submission requirements and review standards of **Sections 2302301.3 and 2302.1**. The requirements and the applicant's submission are compared as follows:

### **Technical and Procedural Analysis**

The status of the application's compliance with 10 DCMR, Chapter 23 is noted below.

#### §§ 2301.2(a) and 2301.3(a) – Completed Certification Form:

Provided.

#### § 2301.2(b) -- Site Characteristics and Conditions.

Provided. Described above.

#### § 2301.2(b) (1) – Existing Topography, Soil Conditions, Vegetation, and Drainage:

The land slopes upwards from elevation 52 feet on New York Avenue to elevation 90 feet near the intersection of Montana Avenue and Bladensburg Road. The surface conditions are noted as paved or compacted from parking. There are no trees in the perimeter of the site.

#### § 2301.2(b) (2) -- Proposed Topography, Including Street Grades and Other Grading Contours:

The applicant will grade the bulk of the site level, but will work with the existing topography at the edges of the site to help minimize the apparent mass of the parking garage and to locate all of the loading functions below grade. The proposed topography is shown on the applicant's Sheet C-1.04. The private road (T Place, N.E.) would provide access from New York Avenue and Montana Avenue Road to several loading areas and parking deck levels. Most of the lowest level of the parking garage and loading will be below the grade of Montana Avenue.

#### § 2301.2(b) (3) – Identification of mature trees to remain and percent of site to be covered by impervious surface.

There are no mature trees on the site. The minimum GAR ratio for the site is 0.3 and the overall development would satisfy this criteria.

#### § 2301.2(b)(4) – Proposed Drainage and Sewer System and Water Distribution:

The plans show that the applicant will meet District agency requirements at the time a building permit application is filed. There would be green roofs and use of pervious paving where appropriate. The developer has proposed extensive landscaping around the perimeter of the site including storm water management and the use of other sustainable strategies that would reduce runoff and water pollution. New tree planting and open spaces would increase vegetation and tree cover where none currently exists on-site.

#### § 2301.2(b) (5) – Proposed Treatment of Existing Natural Features such as Steep Slopes, Ravines, and Natural Watercourses:

There are none to be treated.

#### § 2301.2(b)(6) – Proposed Method of Solid Waste Collection:

As a private development, the applicant has advised that management of the development will contract with a private waste disposal company or companies to remove and dispose of solid waste, recyclables, organic byproducts (such as grease) and all other necessary services based on the tenancies on site. Frequency and vendors will be established and adjusted as necessary to ensure all waste is enclosed and prevented from

becoming visible, or hazardous to the public. Waste disposal would be contained below grade for the majority of retail and apartment residential functions. Trash pick-up for the 18 townhouse units would occur at the rear of the units.

§ 2301.2(b)(7) – Estimated Water Consumption:

This information has not been provided. However, DC Water has provided comments which are attached at the end of this report.

Section 2301.3(b) – Name, Address and Signature of All Owners and the Property Involved in the Application or the Signature of an Authorized Agent:

Provided.

Section 2301.3(d) – Statement indicating the contribution of the project toward implementing city and community goals and policies:

The applicant's statement of support outlines the project's contributions, as defined by relevant comprehensive plan goals and objectives, to the District overall and specifically for this neighborhood.

Section 2301.3(h) – Typical floor plan:

The applicant has provided concept ground level plans for all of the buildings, as well as site plans for the entire site.

Section 2301.3(k) – Other information needed to fully understand the final building proposed for the site:

None has been identified; the LTR application and supplemental filings are sufficient.

## **D. Transportation, Circulation, and Trip Generation Analysis**

The status of the applicant's compliance with the transportation provisions of 10 DCMR, Chapter 23 is noted below.

Section 2301.2(c)(1) – Proposed Circulation System Including General Location of Roadways, Driveways, and Sidewalks:

The development would significantly reduce the number of curb cuts to the site, and result in the construction of new sidewalks and a bicycle path on all roadways bordering the site. Two new private streets would provide access through the site. It would also pay for the installation of a new signalized intersection on Bladensburg Road between Montana and New York Avenues. The CTR illustrates Pedestrian Circulation (Page 17, Figure 8), Bicycle Circulation (Page 18, Figure 9) and Vehicular Access (Page 19, Figure 10) with Circulation (Page 20, Figure 11) and on the plans on sheets 25 through 28.

Section 2301.2(c)(2) – Relationship of the Proposed Circulation System to the District's Street System:

The site is bounded by a six lane major arterial (U.S. Route 50 /New York Avenue) that is the major road entry and exit into the District from the Northeast, a major four lane four-lane road (Bladensburg Road) that serves local and commuter traffic between H Street, NE and the Maryland state line, and a four lane local street (Montana Avenue) that connects the major arterial Rhode Island Avenue (U.S. Route 1) with New York Avenue and Bladensburg Road. The site would include its own private street, T Place NE, which would bisect the site and connect with Montana Avenue to the west and Bladensburg Road and T Street to the east.

**Sections 2301.2(c) (3) and 2301.3(j) – Estimated Number and Types of Trips Assumed to Be Generated by the Project, the Assumed Temporal and Directional Distribution:**

The estimated trip generation is discussed in detail in the applicant’s CTR – Pages 27 – 58 (Figures 15 and 16 for the Inbound Trip Distribution and Outbound Trip Distribution respectively). A summary of mode split assumptions are included and shown as follows:

Land Use	Mode			
	Auto	Transit	Bike	Walk
Residential	80%	10%	4%	6%
Retail	40%	15%	10%	35%
Destination Retail	50%	25%	10%	15%
Grocery	60%	15%	5%	20%
Drive-In Bank	95%	0%	0%	5%
Hotel	70%	15%	0%	15%
Theatre	70%	10%	5%	15%

*Analysis was based on the assumption of a 157-room hotel and 628 residential units.*

**Section 2301.2(c) (4) – Accommodations for and Use of Parking and Loading Areas:**

The applicant is proposing to provide 2,046 parking spaces, which is in excess of the 879 spaces required by zoning. Most would be within Building 1, (Lot 1) which would have a total of 1789 spaces in the 3-level garage. Two hundred spaces would be within the Building 9’s garage on Lot 9 to the south of the site and 8 spaces would be assigned to parking for the townhouses to the east of the site, fronting on Bladensburg Road. The remaining would be shared spaces within the garage system and along T Place, the driveway/private street bisecting the site. The development would provide access to parking from each of the three adjacent streets via T Place NE. Due to the over-supply of parking, the applicant would have to satisfy the Zoning Regulations mitigation requirements for over-parking under Subtitle C § 707.3, also referenced in DDOT’s report in their evaluation of the applicant’s TDM proposal (DDOT Report - page 6 and 7)

All 33 loading berths and 8 service delivery spaces would be located below grade and accessed from Montana Avenue. These would be shared with the development site. The plans include circulation diagrams (Sheets 25-28). In addition, a comprehensive transportation review (CTR), including pedestrian facilities (page 66) was submitted to DDOT for review and comment. DDOT’s comments are provided and attached to this report. The applicant would require future Board of Zoning Adjustment relief to permit the shared loading facilities in accordance with Subtitle C § 901.3 of the Zoning Regulations.

**Section 2301.2(c) (5) – Traffic Management Requirements:**

The traffic study, as reviewed by DDOT, indicates the proposed mitigations by the applicant and DDOT’s evaluations, attached to this report.

**Section 2301.2(c) (6) – Relationship of the Proposed Project to the Mass Transit System:**

Transit service is limited, with the nearest Metro station one mile away on the Red Line at Rhode Island Avenue. The MetroBus B2 route provides 10-minute headway service on Bladensburg Road to the Starburst intersection at Benning Road and H Street during the morning peak and 20-30 minute headways in the evening. The applicant proposes a shuttle service to and from the Rhode Island Metro Station for future residents.



Sections 2301.2(c) (7) and 2301.3(j)—Before and After Capacity Analyses and Level of Service at Critical Intersections:  
Completed.

### **E. Site Plan and Proposed Development**

The status of the applicant's compliance with site plan and development plan provisions of 10 DCMR, Chapter 23 is noted below.

Section 2301.2 (d) (1)—Subdivision Plan:

As shown in Tables 1 and 2 in this report, the application complies.

Section 2301.2 (d) (2).—Location and Description of Structures.

This is summarized in Section III of this report. Modest changes to the current plans have been made in response to OP's recommendations from earlier reviews to encourage a development that was more oriented to New York Avenue and Bladensburg Road. Although the general site plan remains internally focused, OP finds the proposed site plan to be a major improvement over the current condition and disposition of a vacant site, and an enhancement to the appearance of the neighborhood and a major vehicular entrance to the city.

Section 2301.2(d) (3)—Type of Ownership and Management Arrangement:

The applicant owns all of the property covered by the application.

Sections 2301.2(d)(4) and 2301.3(i)—Staging Plan and Construction Phases:

The applicant proposes two construction phases.

- **Phase I: August 2017 - April 2019:** Roads, infrastructure and buildings identified as Buildings 1, 3, 5 and 9
- **Phase II: June 2019 – June 2021** Construction of Buildings 2,4,6,7,8

Completion of the entire buildout is scheduled for 2024. More detailed staging plans for the completion of the project will be determined at the building permit phase for this site.

Section 2301.2(d)(5)—Required New Public Facilities and Impact on Existing Public Facilities:

Along the periphery of the site, the applicant will be replacing and expanding water lines, stormwater lines, concrete enclosed duct bank conduits for telecommunications and electric, new curbs, and gutters.

According to the Department of Parks and Recreation, the area within one mile of the proposed development includes four recreation centers and immediately outside the one-mile radius, there are three more centers for a total of seven recreation centers in close proximity to the development. Renovation of the Arboretum recreation Center is slated for construction in FY 2018 and DPR believes that the new recreation centers in combination with existing facilities will be sufficient to meet the needs of the anticipated new households.

Based on public information obtained from [www.dcps.dc.gov](http://www.dcps.dc.gov), the in-bound elementary school (Langdon Elementary) has a 300-student capacity for ages PK3 through Grade 5. However, DCPS's enrollment system relies on the school lottery system, which presents a choice of enrollment (up to 12 schools) throughout DCPS's system.

There are two libraries associated with this neighborhood including the Rosedale Library to the south off Benning Road and the recently renovated Woodridge Library to the north off Montana Avenue at 1801 Hamlin Street NE.

Section 2301.2(d) (6)—Relationship of Project to Developed and Undeveloped Public Space:

The project's impact on sidewalks, street trees, vaults, etc. will be coordinated as part of the District's public space review process. Within public space, the proposal includes: a net decrease in the number of existing curb cuts and the reconstruction and relocation of 10 curb cuts; the installation of a traffic signal on Bladensburg Road and T Street intersection and necessary curb, reconstruction of all peripheral sidewalks, including an 8-foot wide protected bike lane both on the New York Avenue frontage and through T Place NE connecting with T Street on the east to 17<sup>th</sup> Street NE on the west. Pedestrians would have between 10 and 11 feet sidewalks on Montana and New York Avenues, respectively. There would be approximately 63,000 square feet of green space along the development's frontages and inside the boundaries. The applicant will plant street trees, in enlarged tree pits on the bordering streets in accordance with DDOT's and the Urban Forestry Administration's standards.

## **VI. AGENCY RESPONSES**

Application materials were distributed to the following District departments for their review and comment:

- Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
- Department of Employment Services (DOES)
- Department of the Environment (DDOE)
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- Fire and Emergency Medical Service (FEMS)
- Metropolitan Police Departments (MPD)
- DC Water
- Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

In addition to direct meetings between the applicant, OP and DDOT, the Office of Planning hosted an interagency meeting on October 21, 2016 on the application. Agencies in attendance included:

- District Department of the Environment (DDOE)
- District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
- Fire and Emergency Medical Service (FEMS)
- DC Water;
- MPD; and
- DC Office of Planning

District Department of the Environment (DDOE)

In a letter dated November 10, 2016, DOEE noted that the agency met with the Applicant in August 2016 for a preliminary review of the application. The recommendations in brief are as follows:

- Due to the scale of the development, [The Living Community Challenge](#) of achieving net-positive energy and net-zero water is recommended as a greater commitment to sustainability, comparable to the Yards, City Center and the Wharf.
- A commitment to sustainability including LEED NDv4 certification or BD+C Gold certification.
- Continued collaboration with DOEE on the feasibility of micro-grid implementation to decrease infrastructure cost and increase resiliency.
- The project is strongly encouraged to supply significant solar electricity or on-site renewables to further the District's goals of the Sustainable DC Plan.
- Along with the provision of green roof, the proposal should also consider bio-retention facilities and permeable pavement as well as rainwater harvesting for water re-use within the buildings and for irrigation.
- Air quality should be considered when siting generators, boilers and fuel-burning equipment to minimize odorous emissions at ground level.

DOEE anticipates being a technical resource as the project moves forward. This report is attached.

#### DC Water

In a letter dated November 17, 2016, DC Water noted that while the water and sewer demands for the proposed buildings will likely be dissimilar to existing water and sewer demands of buildings in the project's vicinity, there is existing public water and sewer infrastructure located within 250 feet of the project site. DC Water access easements would be required for any water and sewer utilities located within the proposed private streets. In any event, a final determination on the water and sewer systems ability to support the project would be determined when detailed plans are submitted for DC Water's review.

This report is attached.

#### Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

At meetings held with the community, the question was asked whether the future population of the proposed development would create a service gap in the nearby recreation facilities, including the Arboretum Recreation Center. In a report dated November 10, 2016 to the Office of Planning, DPR noted that the proposed New City development is within a mile of several existing recreation facilities. Further, a new Arboretum Recreation Center would be constructed in FY 2018 and DPR believes that this new center in combination with existing facilities will be sufficient to meet the needs of new and existing households.

This report is attached.

#### DDOT

The applicant coordinated closely with DDOT on the site's design given the location at a major arterial in the city. DDOT's report, references the proposed mitigations offered by DDOT and DDOT's evaluations of the offered mitigations. Where there is disagreement by DDOT, DDOT requires the applicant to address their concerns as these mitigations would be a condition of public space approval. As such, the applicant is expected to continue collaboration with DDOT outside of the Large Tract Review process on several issues. DDOT's attached report provides the details, *but a few are highlighted as follows:*

- The public space - curb, gutter, landscaping;
- The design of bicycle facilities within or adjacent to the site;
- Shuttle drop-off and pick up in public space;
- Location and design of wayfinding signs in public space;
- Development of curbside management and signage plan for the exterior of the site
- Identification of median breaks on New York Avenue and Bladensburg Road.

No other agencies commented on this application to date.

## **VII. COMMUNITY REVIEW**

Application materials were distributed to the following for their review and comment:

- ANC 5C
- Owners of property within 200' of the site and the
- Arboretum Civic Association

ANC 5C: The site is located within the boundaries of ANC 5C. ANC 5C held a community meeting on October 19, 2016 which OP attended and the applicant presented the proposal to the community. The ANC did not take a vote at that meeting. Concerns regarding traffic movement in and around the site as well as bicycle safety were expressed at the meeting. The applicant responded to those questions and concerns. The applicant met with the community over a two-year period as follows:

- January 21, 2015 – Presented at full ANC meeting
- January 23, 2015 – Letter from ANC 5C in support of the Text and Map
- Amendment (ZC Case No. 14-16) (*see* Exhibit H)
- March 30, 2015, June 29, 2015 and July 13, 2016 – Met with Single Member
- District 5C04 Commissioner Jacqueline Manning
- October 19, 2016 – Scheduled to present to full ANC
- ANC 5D (the ANC located adjacent to the Subject Property)
- March, 2015 – Presented at full ANC meeting
- October 2016 – Presented at full ANC meeting

### Woodridge South Community Association

- May 12, 2016 – Presented at Association meeting

### Arboretum Neighborhood Association

- October 14, 2014, May 1, 2015 and May 10, 2016 and October 2016. October, 2016 – Presented at Association Meeting.

Individual members of the community contacted OP to express concerns regarding the location of a traffic signal at the intersection of Bladensburg Road and T Street NE to facilitate traffic flow for the Arboretum neighborhood, and regarding pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity along New York Avenue, as well as through the site – these concerns were forwarded to DDOT and the applicant. Concern was also expressed about whether the recreation facilities would be able to accommodate the increase in the number of residents anticipated by the development – these concerns were forwarded to DPR and the applicant. Security was also a concern and the applicant responded that the management would have its own private security which would cooperate with MPD on security related issues. The Arboretum Civic Association expressed concerns about potential street closures during construction that could adversely impact traffic to and from the Arboretum neighborhood. OP advised that liaisons should be identified by both the developer and the community to keep the community informed of construction related street-closings and other issues during the construction phases.

### **VIII. LTR – OP FINDINGS**

The project proposed by this Large Tract Review Application is generally consistent with the purposes and goals of the LTR regulations, and is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Office of Planning appreciates the applicant’s willingness to discuss and address communities concerns, and to continue to address concerns as the project proceeds through to full build-out of the site. Although the project retains an essentially auto-oriented, suburban-type layout and design, it has incorporated several beneficial changes, including:

- The strengthening of the project’s presence on New York Avenue through the design changes to the large format stores’ façades facing New York Avenue and the attempt to incorporate design features to the above-grade parking garage fronting New York Avenue;
- Addition of residential buildings at the property line along Montana Avenue and Bladensburg Road and a publicly-accessible park and plaza near the intersection of Bladensburg Road and Montana Avenue to activate the site during non-peak periods;
- Increased variety and transparency to the design of all the street-facing edges of the project;
- Safer pedestrian and inclusion of bike paths, and enhanced adjacent landscaping than what currently exists.

cc: Norman M. Glasgow, Jr.; Jessica Bloomfield: Holland & Knight LLP

Andrea Gourdine, Douglas Development Corporation  
Jacqueline Manning, ANC 5C  
Randall Chandler, Arboretum Civic Association  
DCRA, DDOT, DDOE, DC Water, DPR,

#### Attachments:

- Attachment 1: ANC Report, December 26, 2016
- Attachment 2: Applicant’s responses to ANC 5C Report, January 6, 2017
- Attachment 3: DDOT Report, December 5, 2016
- Attachment 4: DOEE Comments, November 10, 2016
- Attachment 5: DC Water Report, November 17, 2016
- Attachment 6: DPR Report, November 10, 2016