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CORRIDOR SQUARE, LLC

CASE NO: ZB-1130M

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MOTION: To recommend approval of the petition, ZB-1130M, to rezone 3.91 acres from TOD to B-2, subject to the property adhering to the Documented Site Plan provided by the Petitioner for this case.

ACTION: Recommend Denial; Vote 5-0.

* * * * *

On September 18, 2025, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, considered the petition of Corridor Square, LLC to amend the Zoning Map to rezone 3.91 acres (the “Property”) from the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) district to the Business General (B-2) district. The Property is located along Route 1 and owned by Corridor Square, LLC (the Petitioner and applicant) as well as Memorial, LLC. The petition also includes a Documented Site Plan (DSP) for a motor vehicle fueling facility and convenience store (proposed *Sheetz*) and a car wash facility (proposed WLR Automotive Group, *Auto Spa Express*).

The Planning Board considered the petition and the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) Technical Staff Report. DPZ indicated the property is in proximity to a MARC transit stop and located in the Route 1 corridor, which is an area targeted for future mixed-use redevelopment. Because of this, the Property and surrounding areas were designated as an Activity Center from the County’s General Plan, *HoCo By Design*. Activity Centers are envisioned to allow a variety of uses, which may include high-density residential, retail, and other local-serving amenities. While some B-2 zoned properties can be found within the County’s identified Activity Centers, most are located outside of its boundaries because the B-2 district does not provide for residential development. The purpose of the TOD district is to provide for development and redevelopment of key parcels of land within 3,500 feet of a MARC station. The TOD district was established along with the CAC and CE-CLI zoning districts with the 2004 Comprehensive Zoning Plan and are used in conjunction with the Route 1 Manual, to emphasize multistory mixed-use development along the corridor and improve the appearance of the Route 1 streetscape, enhance traffic safety, and better accommodate public transit and pedestrian travel.

1 Although the distance from the MARC station to the closest Property boundary exceeds 3,500 feet,
2 DPZ believes the TOD designation is an appropriate zoning district for the property. The B-2 zoning
3 district is established *“to provide for commercial sales and services that directly serve the general*
4 *public”* and the uses allow several auto-oriented commercial uses such as a motor vehicle fueling
5 facilities (as a conditional use), motor vehicle sales and repair, fast food restaurants and shopping
6 centers. According to the *Route 1 Plan: A Plan for Washington Boulevard*, the vision of the corridor
7 *“focuses on preserving Washington Boulevard as an industrial employment and transportation*
8 *corridor.”* DPZ believes the proposed rezoning and development of a motor vehicle fueling facility,
9 car wash, and convenience store could support Route 1 as a transportation corridor as intended in the
10 Route 1 Plan.
11

12 The Petitioner, Corridor Square, LLC., was represented by Mr. Christopher DeCarlo, attorney.
13 Mr. DeCarlo explained the differences between the rezoning process and development process. He
14 stated this request was to rezone the Property to B-2 in conjunction with the accompanying DSP. He
15 explained further requirements for cemetery preservation and site development plan review would
16 occur if this proposal was approved by the Zoning Board. Mr. DeCarlo testified to the properties
17 included in this petition and current conditions of the Property. He stated Parcel 279 is a parking lot
18 from a previous Exxon gas station, Parcel 107 is the front portion of the Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park
19 that has three dilapidated structures, and Parcel 452 is a stockpile yard. The surrounding area includes
20 the remainder of the Memorial Park, multiple automotive services, retail, a future Patient First, and
21 apartments known as ‘The Refinery.’ Mr. DeCarlo discussed that during the 2013 Comprehensive
22 Rezoning, DPZ and the Planning Board recommended the properties be zoned CE-CLI-CR (Corridor
23 Employment – Continuing Light Industrial – Commercial Redevelopment), but an amendment to the
24 zoning map was introduced by the County Council to change the properties to TOD. Mr. DeCarlo
25 testified that a mistake was made in a zoning designation when the “Council failed to take into account
26 then existing facts, or projects or trends which were reasonably foreseeable of fruition in the future,
27 so that the Council’s action was premised initially on misapprehension.” Mr. DeCarlo stated the
28 County Council failed to realize the Property was outside the 3,500-foot radius, targeted for the TOD
29 district, constituting a mistake in zoning. Mr. DeCarlo stated that since the Property is outside the
30 3,500-foot radius for TOD, the Property cannot provide safe and convenient pedestrian access by
31 commuters using the MARC trains and other transit links, which is also stated in the purpose of the

1 TOD district regulations. Mr. DeCarlo stated the B-2 zoning district would provide an opportunity for
2 redevelopment of the Property with commercial sales and services that directly serve the general
3 public, aligning with the legislative purpose of the B-2 district.
4

5 Mr. Chris Ogle, a Professional Engineer with Benchmark Engineering, testified on behalf of
6 the Petitioner, specifically to the DSP. Mr. Ogle discussed the proposed widening of Route 1 and
7 installation of a new signalized intersection on Route 1, immediately west of the Property, that would
8 hopefully be operational by the time the Property is developed. He stated access to the Property would
9 be from the new signalized entrance area and a right-in-only lane from Route 1. He explained that
10 access to the Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park would be relocated south of the property and accessed
11 from the driveway of the new signalized entrance. Mr. Ogle also discussed the proposed 10-foot-wide
12 pedestrian path along Route 1. Mr. Ogle testified to the environmental features, such as wetlands and
13 specimen trees, located on the Property. He stated three bioretention facilities were proposed to treat
14 stormwater management. Mr. Ogle stated the Property went to the Design Advisory Panel (DAP) and
15 that panel did not have major concerns with the layout.
16

17 Mr. Micky Cornelius, a Traffic Engineer with Traffic Group, testified on behalf of the
18 Petitioner, specifically to the DSP. Mr. Cornelius testified that the portion of Route 1 fronting the
19 Property is heavily traveled due to the proximity of the Route 100 interchange. He stated Route 1 has
20 two west and east bound lanes with no median. Mr. Cornelius stated that the State Highway
21 Administration (SHA) has conceptually approved the design as shown on the DSP. Mr. Cornelius
22 stated the DSP includes a new acceleration and deceleration lane on Route 1, the installation of a
23 median along Route 1, and turn lanes into the Property and the Meadowridge Cemetery at the new
24 signalized intersection. Mr. Cornelius stated, in his opinion, the new proposed signal provides safe
25 access, and better access for local traffic and those using the services in the area.
26

27 Mr. John Ideburg with Sheetz, INC., testified on behalf of the Petitioner, specifically to the
28 DSP and the Sheetz business model. Mr. Ideburg explained that Sheetz was founded in 1952 in
29 Altoona, PA and currently serves seven states with over 800 stores and 26,000 employees. The
30 proposed Sheetz at the Property would be the first Sheetz location in Howard County. Mr. Ideburg
31 testified Sheetz uses high quality materials for their architecture and offers dining inside, outside, fuel

1 pumps, made-to-order and grab-and-go food. Mr. Ideburg testified that the location of the Property
2 along Route 1 makes this a great location for a Sheetz. Mr. James Cecil, Planning Board Vice-Chair,
3 asked for clarification regarding the Sheetz location being on the Memorial, LLC owned parcel. Mr.
4 DeCarlo clarified that the applicant, Corridor Square, LLC, is the contract purchaser of the Memorial,
5 LLC parcel giving the Petitioner the ability to apply for this rezoning/DSP. Mr. DeCarlo stated Sheetz
6 would lease the Property from Corridor, LLC, if approved.

7
8 Mr. Chad Bohn with WLR Automotive Group, testified on behalf of the Petitioner, specifically
9 to the DSP and the WLR Automotive Group and Auto Spa Express business model. Mr. Bohn stated
10 WLR Automotive Group was founded in 1987 and includes 13 Lube Centers, 4 full-service auto spas,
11 10 auto-spa expresses, and 2 auto repair centers. Mr. Bohn testified that the facades of their buildings
12 include metal paneling and glass finishings to offer more natural light than what is typically found
13 with car washes. The auto-spa would also include free vacuum apparatuses. Mr. Bohn also testified to
14 the elevations of the auto-spa and noted each auto-spa location includes 25-30 employees.

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16 Mr. Brian Reetz, a Principal with Design Collective and a landscape architect, testified on
17 behalf of the Petitioner, specifically to the DSP. Mr. Reetz discussed how the design was contemplated
18 to consider all the other uses in the area, such as the apartments and Patient First. Mr. Reetz testified
19 that the DSP is an improvement from what is currently on the Property. Mr. Reetz went into detail
20 regarding proposed enhancements to the Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park, including the relocation of the
21 entrance south of the Property. The proposed enhancements to the Memorial Park include landscaping,
22 a stone-column entrance, signage, pet mausoleum, pull-off space for vehicular traffic, pedestrian
23 pathways, fencing, and benches.

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25 Mr. DeCarlo concluded the Petitioner's arguments by stating the proposed rezoning and DSP
26 is consistent with the General Plan, specifically redevelopment of properties in Activity Centers with
27 uses that are economically viable and provide service to the general public. Mr. DeCarlo stated the
28 proposal is also compatible with the Route 1 Manual by fostering private property reinvestment in the
29 corridor to address blight. Mr. DeCarlo also stated that the Petitioner will ask the Zoning Board to
30 place a condition of approval on the request to preserve the portion of the Rosa Bonheur Memorial
31 Park not included in this petition, in perpetuity via restrictive covenants.

Testimony

In person, there were a total of eight members of the public who testified in opposition to this petition. The Planning Board also received seventy-three written testimonies in opposition to the request. Ms. Candy Warden (President of Rosa Bonheur Society), Ms. Sandy Popp, Ms. Tina Simmons (Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites), Mr. David Zinner (Maryland Cemetery Legislative Advocates), Mr. Barry Walters, Mr. Russel Allen, Ms. Mary Beal, testified against the proposal due to the need to protect the Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park, and any pet and human remains buried there. Ms. Meg Ricks (Elkridge Community Alliance) testified against the proposal stating that there was no mistake in designating the Property TOD and that the automotive uses are not needed due to the abundance of similar uses along Route 1. She stated the proposed uses would not support the community.

Board Discussion and Recommendation

Ms. Barbara Mosier, Planning Board member, asked Mr. DeCarlo if the adjacent Refinery apartments were owned by the Petitioner and if a zoning mistake was pursued at the time of that development. Mr. DeCarlo replied that the Refinery apartment development has better access to Dorsey Road which provides better access to the MARC station. Mr. DeCarlo also stated that although that parcel was developed it doesn't mean there wasn't a mistake in the TOD zoning. Ms. Mosier also asked Mr. DeCarlo if he is aware of any discussion by the 2013 County Council regarding the TOD zoning designation. Mr. DeCarlo stated he couldn't find any specific discussions regarding the 2013 zoning designation. Mr. Cecil, Planning Board Vice-Chair, stated his concerns regarding the burial sites at Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park and the lack of communication with the community. He stated having representation from Memorial, LLC would have been helpful in their deliberations. Mr. Cecil stated that through research at the State level, he feels the 3,500-foot radius for TOD is outdated due to the influx of biking, e-bikes, etc. and struggles to find a mistake in zoning. Mr. Mason Godsey and Ms. Lynn Moore, Planning Board members, also stated they don't believe there was a mistake in zoning since the surrounding areas were developed under TOD, specifically the apartments, and the proximity to a MARC station. Ms. Mosier also stated she doesn't believe a mistake in zoning was made and feels pedestrians could walk to the MARC station from the Property. She stated it is difficult

to determine the thought process behind the TOD zoning designation in 2013 without understanding the Council’s discussion. Mr. Cecil stated if the Zoning Board approves the request and the project is presented to the Planning Board at the development plan stage, he would ask for more detailed responses regarding preservation of the Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park and burial protection.

Mr. Cecil made the motion to recommend denial of the petition, ZB-1130M, to rezone the Property from TOD to B-2 and develop pursuant to the accompanying Documented Site Plan. Mr. Godsey seconded the motion. The motion was decided by a vote of 5 to 0.

For the foregoing reasons, the Planning Board of Howard County, Maryland, on this 7th day October 2025, recommends that Zoning Board Case No. ZB-1130M, as described above, be **DENIED**.

HOWARD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Signed by:
Kevin McAiley
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Kevin McAiley, Chair

Signed by:
James Cecil
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James Cecil, Vice-Chair

Signed by:
Mason Godsey
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Mason Godsey

Signed by:
Barbara Mosier
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Barbara Mosier

Signed by:
Lynn Moore
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Lynn Moore

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:
Lynda Eisenberg
4220B635863942E...
Lynda Eisenberg, AICP, Executive Secretary