



Meeting Summary  
April 27, 2022

**Attendance**

Panel Members: Robert Gorman, Chair  
Ethan Marchant, Vice Chair  
Fred Marino  
Larry Quarrick

DPZ Staff: Anthony Cataldo, Nicholas Haines and Melissa Maloney

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Chair Robert Gorman opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.
2. **Review of Plan No. 22-12 Public Storage, 3487 Chevrolet Drive**

Applicants and Presenters:

Developer: Shaun Walker (Public Storage)

Architect: Michael Nieves, Eric Marks (MG2)

Engineer: Emily Pate, Brandon Rowe, Eric McWilliams (Bohler Engineering)

**Background**

The property is approximately 1.68 acres and is comprised of Parcel C1, zoned Manufacturing Light (M-1). The site currently has a 1 story self-storage facility adjacent to an existing 5 story self-storage building on the adjacent Lot C2. The existing 1 story facility will be removed and replaced with a new 5 story, 135,720 square foot, Public Storage building with associated amenities. The project borders Route 29 right of way and is immediately south of the Route 40 and Route 29 interchange. Access to the property is currently provided from South Chevrolet Drive via an access drive.

**Applicant Presentation**

The project is a Public Storage site at the interchange of Rt 40 and Rt 29 and borders South Chevrolet Drive. The existing site is a 1-story Public Storage building that will be replaced by a proposed 5-story (57' high) Public Storage building. Visitors access the site via South Chevrolet Drive through a gate along the eastern edge of the property. There is a 20-25' grade change from South Chevrolet Drive down to the building. The primary loading for the building will be on the south side of the building and will include a loading lobby, parking and ADA parking. An 18' paved fire access lane will be provided in front of the site per the request of Fire and Safety. Landscaping will be provided along the site to meet Rt 40 Manual requirements and Howard County Landscape Manual requirements. A 5' buffer and 6' sidewalk are also proposed in accordance with the Complete Streets Manual. Existing items that will remain include a sign and planting on South Chevrolet Drive, a trash enclosure and the black fence that goes around the site. Plantings will be added in front of the sign to improve the appearance. Due to the grade change portions of the site will need to be buried (between 10-15') on the western and northern edges of the building.

There is a signage plan includes signage on the building with logo and loading signage above entry areas. The applicant advised they are meeting requirements for the Rt 40 Design Manual and the Howard County Design Manual. A lighting plan was provided and meets all requirements.

## **Staff Presentation**

As mentioned, the site is 1.688-acres, Parcel C-1, M-1 zoned property that is located immediately southwest of the Rt 40 and Rt 29 interchange. The project meets the zoning guidelines. The applicants will need a variance for building height since the zoning code has restrictions up to 100'. The applicants are going to raze the existing 1-story structure and build a 5-story building to match its immediate neighbor which is another Public Storage structure. DPZ would like DAP to make recommendations on orientation, layout, configuration, screening or landscaping changes. Also, recommendations on signage, materials, color and character of the building would be greatly appreciated.

## **DAP Questions and Comments**

### **Site Design**

#### **Buildings/Grade**

DAP confirmed there are existing 5-story and 1-story buildings at the site. The 1-story building will be torn down and a new 5-story building will be built. DAP commented that the 1-story building sits at a different finished floor elevation than the 5-story building.

The applicant advised that the proposed building is about 345 and the finished floor of the existing building varies. The front of the building is about 3 stories exposed and the back of the building is 5 stories exposed.

#### **Fire Lane**

DAP inquired if the fire lane will be a paved road in between Chevrolet Drive and the building and commented that this seems redundant and suggested turf grass instead of paving since the street is right there. DAP inquired if there is a requirement for a truck turnaround at the end of the driveway as it appears that would be difficult to accommodate.

The applicant advised yes this will be paved. In discussing with Fire and Life Safety they wanted an 18' paved area around the building due to the slopes and needing fire access. The applicant advised that they can open conversations again with Fire and Life Safety. They had suggested a turf grass but found that that they prefer paving if the slope is 10% or greater. South Chevrolet drive is 20-25' higher than the paved area.

The applicant advised that a turnaround was not mentioned in the meetings with Fire and Life Safety, but they can investigate it. Fire and Life Safety is certainly not expecting a cul-de-sac or turnaround but want to be able to get the truck back there if necessary.

DAP commented it is a good idea to revisit this with the county and doesn't feel that the fire company would put a truck down the dead end next to a retaining wall and berm during a fire instead of sitting up on South Chevrolet drive to spray water onto the building. The turf grass option would be better than pavement.

#### **Shared Efficiencies**

DAP inquired if both sites will be owned by the same entity and if there will be any shared efficiencies such as combining trash, vehicular access or fire truck access but DAP understands the challenges of the different grades. There may be opportunity there.

The applicant advised that the parcel on the right is much higher than the parcel on the left but suggested they could investigate that more.

## **Stormwater Management**

DAP inquired what the long rectangles are on the left side of the building were.

The applicant advised that is stormwater management underground detention in accordance with the Howard County and 100-year storm requirements.

DAP inquired if the applicant will have more impervious cover than the previous structure.

The applicant advised it is about the same but did not have the numbers.

DAP commented that if the fire lane on the south side of the building is in the grass block that would help.

## **Trash**

DAP commented that there is a lot of trash along Chevrolet Drive and inquired if Miller Chevrolet and Public Storage could do some community service by adopting that area of the road. According to the State Highway Administration trash is only picked up once a year. DAP advised this could possibly be added to the maintenance agreement to have trash picked up on the hillside quarterly.

## **Landscape**

DAP commented that the site is heavily planted on the west side of South Chevrolet Drive and asked the applicant to consider putting some understory trees that will have some color like dogwoods, redbud and service berry. These are smaller trees and could give a colorful band behind the street trees. As of now the trees are all sugar maples, red maples, honey locusts and Norway spruce. DAP commented that the area seems a little over planted with just shade trees and may be more interesting with some ornamental flowering trees. DAP also recommended moving the Norway spruce to the other side of the building in the grass strip which would help soften the view from Rt. 29 as the buildings are bright orange and are very visible especially in the winter.

The applicant advised that they have no problem with swapping out the shade trees for ornamentals. The site adjacent to Rt 29 is owned by BGE and is encumbered with a utility easement. There are 2 existing shade trees in the easement that will be kept.

## **Architecture**

DAP commented that on the existing façade there are garage door entrances and inquired if it will be the same for the new structure and inquired about building materials.

The applicant advised that the façade will be different and will not have the garage doors but instead will have a modern entrance to a secondary lobby with a canopy overhang that will open into a lobby space with parking out front. The applicant advised they will carry over the split faced block on the first level that wraps the entire building all the way up to the second-floor height. They will utilize an EIFS material from the second to the fifth floor with different colors to break up the mass.

## **DAP Motions for Recommendations**

1. DAP Chair Robert Gorman made the following motion:  
That the applicant consults with Fire and Life Safety to change the paved fire lane to a grass block lane.  
DAP Vice Chair Ethan Marchant seconded.  
Vote: 4-0
2. DAP Member Larry Quarrick made the following motion:  
That the applicant looks at the landscape plan to see if they can add some flowering and ornamental trees to the west side of the building and move the evergreens to the east side of the building.

DAP Chair Robert Gorman seconded.  
Vote: 4-0

**3. Other Business and Informational Items**

- a. The next DAP meeting will be May 25, 2022 and will have a full agenda.
- b. DAP inquired if the meetings will go back to hybrid or in person. DPZ will check with Amy Gowan, DPZ Director.
- c. DAP commented that sometimes it is difficult to see the detail of the plans. DPZ offered to provide paper copies if desired. DAP commented that higher resolution files would be better.

**4. Call to Adjourn**

DAP Chair Robert Gorman adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM