



Meeting Summary
June 15, 2022

Attendance

Panel Members: Robert Gorman, Chair
Ethan Marchant, Vice Chair
Dan Lovette
Larry Quarrick

DPZ Staff: Nick Haines

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Chair Bob Gorman opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

2. **Review of Plan No. 22-15 Route 1 Royal Farms, 8391 Washington Blvd, Jessup MD**

Applicants and Presenters: Brandon Rowe, Crissie Baur (Bohler), Ashley Roe (Ratcliffe)
Architect: Ratcliffe Architects
Engineer: Bohler Engineering

Background

The property is approximately 4.14 acres and is comprised of Parcel C1, zoned Manufacturing Light (B-1). B-1 zoning was established near Route 1 to provide areas for local businesses to directly serve the general public with retail sales and services. Convenience stores are specifically listed on the list of uses permitted as a matter of right for B-1 Zoned Properties.

The site currently has a one-story U-Haul building and is a mix of paving and gravel. There is also a truck storage area that is enclosed with a chain link and barb wire fence. The existing one-story building and fencing will be removed and replaced with a new 1 story Royal Farms convenience store building and associated parking lot. The project is located at the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Patuxent Range Road. Access to the property is currently provided from Washington Boulevard from three wide access ways.

Applicant Presentation

The site is located at 8391 Washington Boulevard in Jessup Maryland. The property sits in the Northeast intersection of Washington Boulevard and Patuxent Range Road. The parcel is zoned B-1 with an existing U-Haul building and truck storage area. The majority of the property is impervious with a crushed gravel or paving for the vehicle storage use. The applicant proposes a 4,650 square foot Royal Farms Convenience Store located in the southwest corner of the property along the Route 1 frontage. The proposal only includes the convenience store at this point with the site design leaving the option for fueling station add on at a later date. The current B-1 Zoning district does not support the fueling station option, so the gas pumps are not permitted. The orientation of the building and pedestrian accesses are proposed along the eastern façade of the building which is internal to the property.

Vehicular access is proposed from an existing access along Patuxent Range Road that will be shared with the neighboring property. Two additional access points are proposed along Route 1 with one of them being a right in only. An acceleration/deceleration lane and bike lane is also proposed to facilitate smoother transitions into and out of the site and the telephone poles would be moved back. Sidewalk is proposed along the Route 1 and Patuxent Range Road frontages.

Amenity areas are being provided in the way of outdoor seating along the interior front end of the convenience store interior to the site. 62 proposed parking spaces are currently proposed in the design to provide adequate customer parking.

The existing topography for the project has a good deal of slope from south to north and from west to east. The property slopes about 8 to 10 feet from the signalized intersection north to the proposed right-in right-out entrance. There is also about a 10-foot to 11-foot drop in elevation from the Route 1 frontage to the Rear (Eastern) edge of the property.

Stormwater management will be addressed with a large bio facility located on the northern edge of the property adjacent the parking lot.

Landscaping will be provided in accordance with the Route 1 Manual and the Howard County Landscape Manual. Street trees are being proposed along Route 1 in accordance with the Route 1 requirements. Interior and perimeter plantings are also being provided in accordance with the regulations for parking, buffering and screening of the proposed site.

The building architecture includes an entrance vestibule with entrances on either side that faces interior to the site. The entrance vestibule will be visible from the north and south sides with the buildings side perspectives also containing windows. The two sides and rear perspectives of the building will also have false windows with metal awnings added for aesthetics. Building materials include glass, stone, brick, composite siding and metal accents. The site dumpsters will also have a masonry enclosure that will match the design and materials of the building.

Staff Presentation

Staff complimented the applicant on the site designs detail and presentation for the proposed convenience store and the proposed site updates. DPZ requested the panel to make recommendations on the proposed project layout and building orientation and how it integrates into Route 1. DPZ expressed concerns with the building facades and the orientation of the front of the building generally being in conflict with the Route 1 Guidelines. DPZ asked the DAP to provide recommendations and alternatives for the applicant to consider to better address the buildings street front presence.

DAP Questions and Comments

Site Design

DAP asked for clarification regarding the extent of the property that the owner owns.

The applicant explained that the project does not fully encompass the entirety of the property but the majority of it. The proposed site design extends to but does not include an existing gravel parking area on the northern edge of the property.

DAP asked about the potential for a vehicular fuel option and/or additional commercial on the northern portion of the site that is currently shown as green open space.

The applicant responded that there is no current plans for the fueling pumps option, but that they could potentially be included with future plans should the zoning change for the property.

The applicant further explained that there is the ability to include commercial uses in the area in the future.

DAP suggested that the applicant consider using an internal drive way to connect the proposed uses on the site in lieu of channeling traffic back out onto Route 1. DAP felt that this would lessen the amount of curb cuts necessary for the area and meet some of the Route 1 goals.

DAP suggested using a building with two entrances to give the building a presence on Route 1 and would could create a seating and eating area under the street trees instead of adjacent the parking lot.

The applicant responded that they had moved the building as close as possible to the roadway and propose a retaining wall along the Route 1 frontage to assist with making up grade while also creating a swale to facilitate moving stormwater around the building. DAP suggested that the planter wall area could be improved with some plantings and could potentially make an attractive courtyard area between the building and the sidewalk. DAP also suggested that having the rear entrance at the corner and shifting the proposed pedestrian stairs close to the intersection would facilitate and accentuate the proposed outdoor space and gable area.

DAP noted that there was existing curb along the southern entrance driveway shared with the neighboring property and asked if it was going to be removed.

The applicant responded that the eastern edge offsite would remain as existing but the western side would be reworked and redesigned and improved for aesthetics and meeting truck turning requirements.

DAP also asked what the extent of the site would be restored back to grass.

The applicant responded that the area that would be converted back to lawn was only within the limits of disturbance. The areas outside the LOD would be left as they currently exist. DAP suggested that the applicant consider clear the entire remaining site area and restore it to grass to bring up the entire area but understood that increasing the LOD would increase their SWM requirements.

DAP asked about the stormwater management and how it functions on the site.

The applicant advised that there is a stream channel just off the northern edge of the property that the general grading flows the water toward. The majority of the SWM flows to a bioretention device to treat the water before being released toward the stream. The north eastern portion of the property uses sheet flow across the lawn area before existing offsite.

Architecture

DAP commented that there should be more done to the western and southern facades to create a more inviting building along the road frontage in place of the bunker appearance. DAP was concerned that the back of the building was facing Route 1 which is counterintuitive to the Route 1 Manual and noted that there was a Royal Farms constructed on Route 1 and Montevideo Road that has entries on both sides of the building. DAP suggested utilizing this layout which could create a seating and eating area under the street trees instead of adjacent the parking lot.

DAP noted that the building corner of Route 1 and Patuxent Range Road should be accentuated as it is the front and leading building corner. DAP also suggested that the proposed metal awnings should be

continued across the building facades to give the facades more interest. DAP also suggested that having the rear entrance at the corner and shifting the proposed pedestrian stairs close to the intersection would facilitate and accentuate the proposed outdoor space and gable area.

Landscape

DAP thought the project should continue the street trees along the full frontage or the site to continue the streetscape appearance and liked the use of the London Plane Trees.

DAP suggested additional and cascading plantings along the retaining wall along the Route 1 frontage to create a more appealing outdoor courtyard area adjacent the building.

DAP asked why the bioretention area doesn't have any landscape plantings.

The applicant said they typically don't detail that kind of landscape but would dress up the area with some native landscaping.

DAP suggested using a meadow mix in the open grass area to create a more unique landscaped area that could exist and only be mowed or maintained once a year.

DAP asked if the northern portion of the property has substantial trees or forest resources and to what extent the northern parking area will be visible.

The applicant responded that there is some native vegetation but nothing that would be considered forest. The applicant further explained that the existing vegetation screens the asphalt parking area

DAP Motions for Recommendations

1. DAP Vice Chair Ethan Marchant made the following motion:

The applicant revisit the building facades that face Patuxent Range Road and Route 1 to create building frontage that carries the appearance of a building front on those primary streets.

DAP Chair Bob Gorman seconded.

Vote: 4-0

2. DAP Chair Bob Gorman made the following motion:

The applicant reconsider the location of the pedestrian stairs to the southwest corner, keep the sidewalk access from the south, and put a seating terrace south of the building between the sign and the sidewalk.

DAP Member Larry Quarrick seconded.

Vote: 4-0

3. Other Business and Informational Items

DPZ Staff Nicholas Haines noted that there is nothing on the schedule and would keep the Panel apprised of any changes.

4. Call to Adjourn

DAP Chair Bob Gorman adjourned the meeting at 8:07 PM