



Docket Item #7

Development Special Use Permit # 2011-0001

Application	General Data	
Project Name: Potomac Yard – Landbay L. Multifamily Building Location: 1400 Main Line Blvd (northern portion of Landbay L.) Applicant: Potomac Yard Landbay L., LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar	PC Hearing:	January 5, 2012
	CC Hearing:	January 21, 2012
	If approved, DSUP Expiration:	January 21, 2015
	Plan Acreage:	2.5 acres (109,906 sf)
	Zone:	CDD #10
	Proposed Use:	Residential with ground floor retail
	Dwelling Units:	276 units (202 1-bed and 74 2-bed)
	Gross Floor Area:	302,979 sf (3,559 sf Retail)
	Small Area Plan:	Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens
	Historic District:	n/a
	Green Building:	EarthCraft

Purpose of Application

Request for approval of a development special use permit, with site plan, to construct a multifamily building with 276 dwelling units and 3,559 sf of retail, with an embedded parking structure consisting of one level below grade and five levels above-grade with 368 spaces.

Special Use Permits and Modifications Requested:

1. Parking reduction for residential 49 spaces
2. Transfer of 36 dwelling units from Landbays H, I and J to Landbay L, as permitted by CDD #10 condition 3.a.

Staff Recommendation: APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

Staff Reviewers: Gary Wagner, gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov

Katye North, [katye.north@alexandriava.gov](mailtokatye.north@alexandriava.gov)

James Roberts, james.roberts@alexandriava.gov

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, JANUARY 5, 2012: On a motion made by Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Lyman, the Planning Commission voted to **recommend approval** of the DSUP #2011-0001, a Parking Reduction for 49 spaces and SUP for the transfer of 36 dwelling units from Landbays H, I and J to Landbay L, to construct a multifamily building with 276 dwelling units and 3,559 sf of retail, with an embedded parking structure consisting of one level below grade and five levels above-grade with 368 spaces. The motion carried 6-0, with Mr. Robinson absent.

Reason: The Planning Commission generally expressed support of the proposal and agreed with staff recommendations. In response to community concerns regarding parking, the Planning Commission added a new condition (30 a.) that would prohibit residents of the building from being eligible to apply for or receive Parking District 6 residential on-street parking permits. The Commission also discussed their concern for the change in the above grade parking policy made by the City Council that changed Condition 11 of the CDD to permit above grade parking structures subject to certain criteria.

30. **CONDITION ADDED BY PLANNING COMMISSION:** Locate a minimum of 343 parking spaces in the garage for residents, and 25 parking spaces for retail/visitors. Residential parking spaces shall be separated from retail/visitor spaces.
- a. Residents of the building shall be ineligible to apply for or receive Parking District 6 residential on-street parking permits. (PC) (P&Z)(T&ES)

Speakers:

Mr. Paul Linehan, 401 E. Monroe Avenue, spoke in support of the project. However, Mr. Linehan expressed concern regarding the requested parking reduction and asked that the parking adhere to existing City regulations. Mr. Linehan also expressed concern that parking for the new Simpson Fields and dog parks are not addressed, and that there is no discussion about the Mount Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan in the Staff Report.

Mr. David Fromme, representing the Del Ray Civic Association, spoke in support of the project. Mr. Fromme also expressed concern for parking and that residents of the development should not be eligible to apply for or receive Parking District 6 residential on street parking permits. He also recommended that on street parking be limited to 2-3 hours on Monroe Avenue and Mail Line Boulevard to discourage metro riders from parking on the streets. Mr. Fromme also recommended that a disclaimer be provided in the conditions notifying future residents of the proposed adjacent dog park.

Mr. Christopher Feeley, 1510 Dewit Street, spoke in support of the project. However, Mr. Feeley reiterated his concern for the parking reduction and that parking for the project should be provided per the City parking regulations. He mentioned that parking on the streets is currently a problem because of Simpson Fields and the dog park and that residents rely on the on street parking in the area because they do not have available off street parking. Mr. Feely also raised a concern for the height of the building as it relates to future development on the Giant and CVS site.

Cathy Puskar, 2200 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300, Arlington, VA, represented the applicant.



DSUP# 2011-0001

1/5/2012



I. **SUMMARY**

A. Recommendation & Summary of Issues

Staff recommends **approval** of the development application for the proposed multi-family building on Landbay L of Potomac Yard, subject to compliance with the staff recommendations. The proposal is consistent with the CDD Concept Plan for Potomac Yard and the Potomac Yard Design Guidelines. The development will provide an additional residential type to complement the townhouses and urban lofts approved for the remainder of Landbay L and nearby Landbays I and J. In addition, the development will complete the development proposed for Landbay L and provide a finished streetscape for Monroe Avenue and Main Line Boulevard.

There are several key issues that were considered with this proposal as discussed in more detail within the report, including:

- Conformance with the Small Area Plan, Design Guidelines, and CDD Concept Plan;
- Architecture and building design;
- Provision of adequate parking;
- Upgrades to the pedestrian environment and streetscape;
- Coordination of open space; and
- Retail uses.

B. General Project Description

The applicant and developer, Potomac Yard Landbay L, LLC, has submitted a proposal for a multi-family building on the northern portion of Landbay L at the corner of Monroe Avenue and Main Line Boulevard. The building will be five stories with 276 residential units and approximately 3,500 sf of retail. Parking for the units will be provided in one level of an underground garage and five levels of above grade, structured parking, which is entirely wrapped by the residential units. A small amount of open space is provided in an internal courtyard for the residents. To construct this project, the applicant has requested approval of Development Special Use Permit with Site Plan, which includes special use permits for (1) a 49 space parking reduction and (2) transfer of 36 dwelling units from Landbays H, I and J to Landbay L, as permitted by CDD #10 condition 3.a.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Procedural Background

In 1999, the City Council approved a CDD Concept Plan for the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens development. This plan called for a mix of office, residential, retail, and hotel uses across the 295 acre former railyard, which was divided into 14 landbays. Development in the area is governed by the CDD Concept Plan, as well as the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens Master Plan and the Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines. These documents establish development levels

and uses for each landbay within Potomac Yard and set requirements for the design and timing of the open spaces and infrastructure for the entire development.

Over the last decade, a few amendments to the Concept Plan have been approved that have allowed changes to the amount and types of uses for the landbays. With regard to specific amendments to Landbay L, the Concept Plan was amended in 2008 to shift all of the office floor area (473,000 sf) previously allocated to this landbay to Landbay H, thereby creating a residential landbay with a small amount of retail. In 2010, the CDD Plan was amended again to make a number of changes across the landbays. As part of this amendment, retail was approved to be shifted from Landbays I, J, and L to Landbay H, thereby reducing the retail for Landbay L from 10,000 sf to 5,000 sf.

The area proposed for development by this application is the northern portion of Landbay L. The entire landbay is approved for 364 residential units and 5,000 sf of retail. A portion of Landbay L has already been approved for 124 townhouses and urban lofts as part of the Landbays I and J West, and Landbay L DSUP approval in September 2011. This leaves 240 units for the remaining portion of Landbay L, although the applicant has proposed an additional 36 units be transferred to this landbay per CDD condition 3.a (a detailed analysis of this transfer is provided in the staff analysis portion of this report).

B. Site Context

Landbay L is a long, linear parcel located between Monroe Avenue and the Braddock Metro Station, just west of the Metro and railroad tracks. It is the only Potomac Yard landbay west of Route 1 (Jefferson Davis Highway) that is slated for residential development. The northern portion of the landbay is immediately adjacent to the realigned Route 1 bridge, although it does not connect in this location.

The portion of Landbay L that is the subject of this application is at the northern end of the landbay along Monroe Avenue and Main Line Boulevard. The property is 2.5 acres, which is approximately one fifth of the entire 11.5 acre Landbay L parcel. South of the subject property, in the remaining portion of Landbay L, is the recently approved townhouse/urban loft development to be done by PY Development. Immediately west of the site is the proposed dog park location, with the proposed Virginia Dominion Power substation and the existing Goldcrust Bakery further west along Monroe Avenue. North of the site are new ballfields constructed as part of the overall Potomac Yard development. East of the site is the Route 1 bridge, metro and rail tracks, and the southern portion of the Landbay K park which includes sidewalks to the larger portion of the park.

C. Detailed Project Description

Although this development is within Potomac Yard, the extent of this particular proposal is limited to the building and the immediate streetscape improvements around the site. The roads, infrastructure, and open space for Landbay L will be installed by PY Development. This proposal is for a five-story multi-family building at the corner of Monroe Avenue and Main Line Boulevard. The building will include 276 residential units (202 one-bedroom and 74 two-

bedroom) and 3,559 sf of retail. The project is designed to be rental apartments, although it could be converted to condominium at a later date.

The primary entrance to the building will be on Monroe Avenue, although a secondary entrance will be provided on the opposite side of the building facing the new townhouse and urban loft development that was approved for the southern portion of Landbay L. The parking is provided on the eastern half of the building in one underground parking garage level and five levels of structured parking above grade, and garage access is provided on Main Line Boulevard. The above grade parking is completely wrapped by a single loaded corridor of units on each level. The units on the western half of the building are double loaded and the internal units overlook the courtyard that is between the two building entrances.

III. ZONING

Property Address:	1400 South Main Blvd (new address will be assigned with subdivision)	
Total Site Area:	109,906 sf (2.5 acres)	
Zone:	CDD #10	
Current Use:	Vacant	
Proposed Use:	Multifamily Residential with Ground Floor Retail	
	Permitted/Required	Proposed
Number of Units	364 – Total for LB L 418.6 – 15% transfer*	276 (Multifamily building) 124 (previously approved Urban Lofts and Townhouses) 400 – Total for LB L
Amount of Retail	5,000 sf (maximum)	3,559 sf
Height	90 feet	68 feet (5 stories)
Parking	392 spaces – Residential 19 spaces - Retail 411 spaces – Total 59 spaces – 15% Visitor	343 spaces – Residential 25 spaces – Retail/Visitor 368 spaces – Total (within garage) 53 spaces – Visitor (on street)
Loading spaces:	0	1

* Per CDD Condition 3a, density may be transferred up to 15% of the original amount approved for the Landbay through an SUP request.

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS

A. Conformance to the Small Area Plan and CDD Concept Plan

While the City's Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens Small Area Plan provides some criteria for residential development, the 2010 amended Concept Plan is the most current guiding document

for the redevelopment of the Yard. The Concept Plan designates that these landbays be a mixture of uses, predominantly residential, with the potential for small, neighborhood-serving retail space at future transit stops along Route 1 and the east/west framework streets (i.e. Howell, Custis, and Swann, etc.).

This application is for a 5 story, predominantly residential building, with a small amount of neighborhood serving retail on the ground level along Monroe Avenue and structured parking entirely wrapped by the building, per the CDD and Urban Design Guidelines.

Above-grade Parking Structure

The March 1999 Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines (updated in February 2007 and again in November 2010) allowed for above-grade structured parking as long as it was embedded in the block. However, over the years, the Planning Commission and City Council had established a strong Citywide practice of not allowing above-grade structured parking, and required all on-site parking to be below grade, except in very specific cases – such as where there were environmental issues or for retail collector garages.

In 2010, there were a series of amendments to CDD #10 and several of these amendments related to parking. Specifically, there was extensive discussion about above-grade parking. Ultimately, the City Council voted to permit above-grade parking for multi-family residential and office uses, with certain parameters as described below.

The reason for this particular amendment was to be consistent with parking conditions in CDD#19. CDD#19 permits above-grade parking for multi-family residential and office uses, so long as there is a minimum of one level of below-grade parking and the parking structures are wrapped with active uses and architecturally treated to stimulate the street. Per the November 2010 amendments, CDD #10 (Condition 11.A.) requires that all parking be underground, except that above-grade parking structures are permitted if one level of parking is below grade and the above grade portions are located in the central portion of the block. Additionally, each level of above-grade parking facing a street or park/open space must be devoted to active uses such as residential, office or retail, with a minimum depth of 35 feet.

The project is consistent with Condition 11.A. in that it is essentially designed as two buildings (although it has three differing architectural skins – see Building Design discussion below). The easternmost portion houses all the parking for project: one level of parking under this easternmost section and a parking structure that is entirely wrapped with single-loaded corridor and dwelling units on all sides. The western portion of the building connects to the eastern building at building breaks (described below in the Building Section), and has a double-loaded corridor providing access to the dwelling units. There is no parking under or in the western portion. Staff feels that this arrangement works well in that the parking structure is completely embedded within the eastern building and is not visible from any street, park or private open space area. The parking structure further meets the CDD requirements by having one level of below-grade parking and 5 levels of above grade parking entirely wrapped by active use to a depth of 35 ft. Additionally, the highest level of the garage is approximately 18 feet below the roof of the building, making it less likely to be seen from surrounding, taller development. Also,

the amount of parking structure provided is only what is necessary to support the development. The applicant is not proposing high parking ratios and has requested a parking reduction of 49 spaces. If the additional 49 spaces were to be provided, the parking structure would have been one additional level higher.

The CDD Concept Plan also recommends a maximum of 5,000 sf of retail at this site and 3,500 sf is being provided. While this retail is not one of the retail nodes located at a future transit stop along Route 1, the retail is located close to Route 1, and is convenient to the surrounding community and recreational facilities such as the YMCA, Simpson Fields and the future dog park.

CDD Dwelling Unit Transfer

The CDD allows the transfer of dwelling units from one landbay to another as long as the transfer does not increase or decrease the amount of dwelling units by 15% or more from the number of dwelling units approved for the landbay (CDD #2010-0001, Condition 3.a.). The applicant has proposed a transfer of 36 dwelling units to Landbay L from Landbays H, I and J. The transfer increases the overall unit count in Land Bay L from 364 units to 400 units (a 9.9% increase). Adjustments have been made to H, I and J to ensure that there is not an increase or decrease in dwelling units by 15% or more, and to ensure that each development parcel remains viable. The number of units transferred from each landbay are (H-15 units); (I - 1 unit); and (J-20 units). See Unit Transfer Chart and amended CDD Concept Plan (Attachments A & B respectively). Staff supports the requested transfer of 36 dwelling units to Landbay L.

B. Conformance to the Urban Design Guidelines

All applications in Potomac Yard are subject to the Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines. Staff and the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) have reviewed this proposal for conformance to the design concepts and details set forth in the governing document. The Design Guidelines provide general plans for development patterns in the Yard as well as design details such as block sizes, open space dimensions, and suggested building materials. Staff and PYDAC support the proposal as it meets the intent of the Design Guidelines. A letter from PYDAC is included in the staff report as Attachment C.

Creating Neighborhoods

The multifamily block is formed by the intersecting streets of Monroe Avenue and Main Line Boulevard to the north and east, a large $\frac{1}{4}$ acre open space area to the south and a proposed City-owned and operated dog park, constructed by PY Development, LLC to the west. The streets, sidewalks, and a mid-block pedestrian connection between the building and the dog park create a network that connects the new neighborhoods with the existing. Several new interior streets in the new townhouse development to the south are oriented east/west and will connect into the existing neighborhoods, as envisioned by the Urban Design Guidelines.

Open Space

The open space for this development consists of approximately 9,000 square feet of at-grade publicly-accessible open space and an approximately 8,000 square-foot interior amenity courtyard with a swimming pool, grilling and seating areas and landscaped areas. The open space that is visible and accessible to the public consists primarily of landscape planting areas adjacent to the building, and a mid-block pedestrian connection between the site and the future dog park that will provide convenient pedestrian access to Monroe Avenue from the neighborhood and open space areas to the south.

The total amount of open space required for Landbay L is 2.8 acres (20% x 14 ac.). With the recently approved townhouse section just to the south, a portion of the future dog park that is within Landbay L and with this parcel, approximately 3.6 acres of open space will be provided in the landbay. The open space in the townhouse section will consist of a play area at the southern end of the development and a $\frac{1}{4}$ acre passive open space area between the townhouses and the multifamily parcel with shade trees, park benches, trash and recycling receptacles, and plantings beds. The open spaces will be owned and maintained by the Homeowners Associations, with public access easements.

Parcel Standards and Building Guidelines

The development proposal meets the parcel standard requirements in terms of lot size, frontage requirements, and integration of pedestrian connections and open space into the proposed and existing neighborhoods. The lot is considered a corner lot and therefore frontage requirements of a minimum of 80% apply to both the Monroe Avenue side and Main Line Boulevard.

The proposed building is categorized as a mixed-use, large apartment building in the Design Guidelines. The building meets the design criteria regarding building height, entrance orientation, front façade lengths of no longer than 200 ft., building articulation (recesses and projections) to break down the overall scale of the building, a variety of building styles and window treatments, and changes in building materials and colors. For further information about the design of the building, see Building Design below.

Pedestrian Environment and Streetscape Design

The proposal includes streetscape elements that will enhance the pedestrian experience. The sidewalks are 14 feet wide along the main streets (Main Line Boulevard and Monroe Ave.) and a minimum six feet wide elsewhere on the site to allow for two or more people walking together side-by-side. The majority of sidewalks will be made of concrete with the exception of the framework street (Main Line Boulevard), which will be brick. Street trees are provided along the streets to create a shade canopy for pedestrians. On-street parking is provided along Monroe Avenue in front of the site, as well as on both sides of Main Line Boulevard, which helps to serve as traffic calming and creates a buffer between the sidewalk and the travel lanes. A pedestrian connection is provided along the west side of the building to link the development and open spaces to the south through to Monroe Avenue, making it easy for pedestrians to access the

