

Docket Item #13
DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN #2004-0002
Ellsworth/Howell Office Building

Planning Commission Meeting
May 4, 2004

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a 5-year extension of a previously approved development site plan for construction of an office building.

APPLICANT: Samuel Ellsworth
by Ronald J. Keller of R.C. Fields, Jr. & Associates

LOCATION: 900 North Washington Street

ZONE: OCM (50)/Office Commercial Medium Zone

II. BACKGROUND / HISTORY:

This site plan for 900 North Washington Street was originally approved by the Planning Commission on May 5, 1992. In March 1994, the Commission extended the site plan approval to May 5, 1997. In May of 1997, the site plan approval was again extended to November 1998. On January 5, 1999, the site plan approval was extended to January 5, 2004.

The Old and Historic Alexandria District Board of Architectural Review (BAR) approved the design concept for this building on May 16, 1990 (BAR Case #90-76). Since the 1990 design approval has expired, approval of the proposed office building by the Board of Architectural Review is required. A condition of approval of the DSP extension requires that any building which is constructed on the site must be substantially similar to the building approved in BAR case #90-0076.

III. SITE CHARACTERISTICS:

A. Site Description:

The subject property is located at the intersection of Washington, Powhatan and Montgomery Streets. Powhatan Street forms the north property line of the site, and Montgomery Street forms the south property line. The property adjoins a 7-11 for which an SUP application was recently filed as a nonconforming convenience store.

Due to the angle of Powhatan Street, the property is triangular in shape. Across Powhatan, to the north, is a property with a similar shape. That property is occupied by the Association of Physician Assistants Programs and has been developed with an architecturally unique wedge-shaped building.

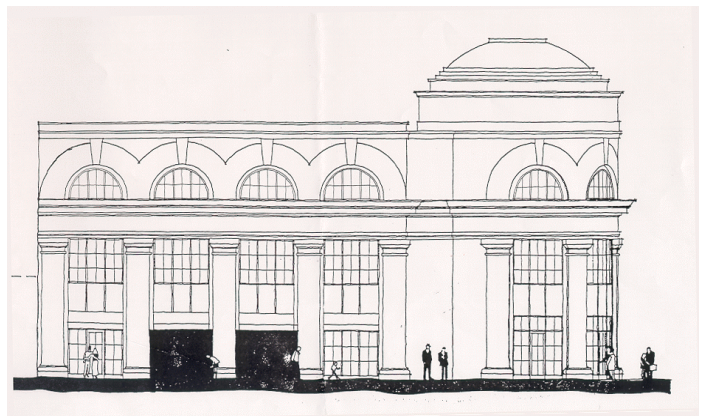
B. Zoning:

At the time of the original site plan approval for this office building, the site was zoned C-2/ Commercial. In June 1992, the property was rezoned to OCM (50) Office Commercial Medium in conjunction with the City's adoption of a new comprehensive Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance. As a result, the proposed development does not meet current parking requirements or permitted FAR. The proposal provides 29 parking spaces, while 35 are currently required. The applicant could meet the current requirements, although this would result in a less desirable building as discussed below.

Ellsworth - Howell Office Building		
Property Address:	900 North Washington Street	
Total Site Area:	9,899 square feet	
Zone:	OCM (50) / Office Commercial Medium Zone	
Current Use:	Dry Cleaners and Check Cashing	
Proposed Use:	Office with First Floor Retail	
	<u>Permitted/Required</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Floor Area	14,984 square feet	Approx. 17,000 square feet
FAR	1.5	Approx. 1.7
Yards	N/A	0
Height	50 feet maximum	50 feet
Parking	35 minimum	29

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS:

The current proposal for the site was created prior to the May 1993 adoption of design guidelines for the Washington Street corridor, and under a different zoning classification than is presently applicable to the property. Nonetheless, the proposal reflects excellent design and will be a positive addition to the streetscape of Washington Street. In fact, the proposal was specifically cited as an example of meritorious design in the 1993 Washington Street Guidelines.



View from Montgomery Street

New guidelines for Washington Street were adopted in 2003. While an in-depth analysis of the proposal’s compliance with the design guidelines will not be conducted until an application is made for BAR approval, staff believes the proposal complies with the Washington Street Standards:

- The proposed building will be compatible with historic buildings in the area in terms of mass, scale, design, and style.
- The proposed 17 foot bay width falls within the range of typical bay widths in Old Town.
- Quality building materials will be used.
- The building shows a high level of ornamentation.

- The building is designed to address both street frontages, with the front plane of the building adjacent to the sidewalk.
- Parking will be provided underground or within the building.

The current design incorporates approximately 1,500 square feet of ground floor retail use. This project could be brought into compliance with both the 1.5 FAR and the parking requirements by eliminating the retail space and converting it to parking. The triangular shape of the property has decreased the efficiency of the building's interior, particularly with respect to parking design. Redesigning the building and increasing the parking by eliminating the retail would result in a less desirable building design and ground floor use for this visually prominent location. Staff has also included new recommendations of approval (conditions 23-64) to refine some areas of the site, landscaping and environmental requirements to be consistent with current requirements and standards and concerns raised by the community.

Staff is therefore supportive of the requested site plan extension with its high design quality and active ground floor uses.

V. COMMUNITY REVIEW:

Staff held a community meeting regarding the proposed extension on March 29, 2004. North Old Town Independent Citizens, Old Town North Community, Northeast Citizens Association and Old Town Civic Association were all invited to the meeting. The residents expressed support for the design of the proposed building, and stated that they are supportive of the extension because of the quality of the architecture and ground floor retail. The citizens raised the following issues:

- The building should be designed so that cars waiting to enter the parking garage from Montgomery Street will not block the public sidewalk or street. This has been added as a condition.
- A request was made to make the conference rooms available to the community. This has been added as a condition.

VI. RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approval** of the proposed 5 year site plan extension.

STAFF: Eileen P. Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Jeffery Farner, Chief, Development;
David Sundland, Urban Planner III

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions.

Note: Conditions 1 through 22 are brought forward from DSP 98-0028 (with proposed changes as indicated below). Conditions 23 through 64 have been added by staff.

1. Show proposed site grading. Show elevations of lower parking garage. (T&ES)
2. Provide vertical profile for car entrance/exit ramp. (T&ES)
3. Provide storm water management for quantity and quality control in conformance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act per Section XIII of the zoning ordinance. (T&ES)
4. Provide brick sidewalks on Powhatan and Montgomery Streets to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES. The sidewalk on Powhatan Street must be a minimum 8 feet in width. (T&ES)
5. Provide soil investigation report with recommendations for excavation, foundation design, sheeting and shoring, etc. (T&ES).
6. Remove and dispose of underground fuel storage tanks in accordance with EPA regulations and to the satisfaction of the Alexandria Code Enforcement official.
7. **(REVISED BY STAFF)** ~~Provide grates for all tree wells along sidewalks on Montgomery Street side.~~ Trees on Montgomery Street shall be located in 5 foot wide continuous landscape strips. (T&ES) (P&Z)
8. Consolidate the two lots and submit a plat prior to release of the site plan. (P&Z)
9. **(REVISED BY STAFF)** No curb cuts shall be located along North Washington Street. All vehicular access shall be from Montgomery Street and Powhatan Street. Curb cuts shall not exceed 22 feet in width. Brick shall be provided for the curb cuts on Montgomery and Powhatan to provide a continuous brick sidewalk, to the satisfaction of the Director of the Planning & Zoning Department. (P&Z)
10. The developer is to make monetary compensation to the City for lack of on-site landscaping in an amount to be determined by the City Arborist. (Arborist)
11. No construction materials or equipment will be permitted to be stored on the public right of way during construction. (T&ES)

12. Designate one additional handicap parking space to be contiguous to the entrance of the building where one full size space is now marked. (Code)
13. Handicapped spaces are to be 18.5 x 8 feet with a 5 foot access aisle. (Code)
14. One handicap parking space is to be van accessible. (Code)
15. The garage clearance is to be 98 inches to allow for van accessible space. (Code)
16. That the maximum FAR not exceed 1.7. (P&Z)
17. Submit final site plan providing detailed floor area ratio calculations including net and gross floor areas for each floor, and an accounting of all allowable deductions taken.
18. Underground all utilities along the site's frontage. This requirement may be waived by the Director of T&ES provided a waiver request is filed with the City and the conditions specified in the City Code for doing so are met. (T&ES)
19. **(REVISED BY STAFF)** The applicant shall coordinate improvements to the street frontage, including street trees and light standards, with the improvements at the American Academy of Physicians Assistants building and the Old Town Gateway project. Street trees shall be provided 25 to 30 feet on center. (P&Z)
20. The applicant shall meet the zoning ordinance parking requirement on site, or in the immediate vicinity of the building, to the satisfaction of the Director of P&Z. If off-site spaces are proposed, applicant shall establish a program to guarantee that the off-site spaces are used. (P&Z)
21. Due to the prior history of the site and the potential for contamination, the Office of Environmental Quality recommends that the final site plan shall not be released and no construction activity shall take place until the following has been submitted and approved by the Directors of Health and T&ES:
 - a. Submit a Site Characterization Report/Extent of Contamination Study detailing the location, the contaminants and the estimated quantity of any contaminated soils and/or groundwater at or in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site.
 - b. Submit a Risk Assessment indicating any risks associated with the contamination.
 - c. Submit a Remediation Plan detailing how any contaminated soils and/or groundwater will be dealt with, including plans to remediate utility corridors. "Clean" backfill shall be used to fill the utility corridors.
 - d. Submit a Health and Safety Plan indicating measures to be taken during any remediation and/or construction to minimize the potential risks to workers, the neighbors and the environment. (Health)

22. The five year extensions granted on January 5, 1999, and May 4, 2004, shall be effective only if the building is substantially similar to the building approved in BAR case #90-0076.

(The following conditions were added by staff:)

23. The parking garages shall be designed so that a vehicle waiting to enter the garage (waiting for a gate and/or card reader) can do so on-site and will not block the public sidewalk or roadway. (P&Z)
24. The conference rooms shall be made available to the public for community meetings TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE Director of P&Z. (P&Z)
25. Underground all the utilities along the frontage of the property on Powhatan and Montgomery Streets. (T&ES)
26. Applicant shall construct 10 foot wide stamped asphalt crosswalks on Powhatan Street and Montgomery Street. (T&ES)
27. Applicant shall construct two (2) handicap ramps on the corner of Powhatan and Montgomery to align with proposed crosswalks. (T&ES)
28. Vehicular entrance on Powhatan Street frontage may conflict with new asphalt traffic calming median. Restrict entry to right-in, right-out only. (T&ES)
29. Applicant shall provide \$850/ea to the Director of T&ES for the purchase and installation of two (2) city standard street cans along the public streets. (T&ES)
30. Provide internally illuminated street name signs at the traffic signal. (T&ES)
31. Provide new street lighting along both frontages of the building on Powhatan Street and Montgomery Street. (T&ES)
32. The applicant shall provide six (6) bicycle parking spaces , one (1) shower per gender and two (2) lockers per gender to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES. (T&ES)
33. Developer to comply with the peak flow requirements of Article XIII of AZO. (T&ES)
34. The developer agrees to deliver all solid waste, as defined by the Code of the City of Alexandria, to a refuse disposal facility designated by the Director of T&ES. The developer further agrees to stipulate in any future lease or property sales agreement that all tenants and/or property owners shall also comply with this requirement. (T&ES)

35. Show existing and proposed street lights and site lights. Indicate the type of fixture, and show mounting height, and strength of fixture in Lumens or Watts. Provide manufacturer's specifications for the fixtures. Provide lighting calculations to verify that lighting meets City Standards. (T&ES)
36. The applicant is advised that all stormwater designs that require analysis of pressure hydraulic systems and/or inclusion and design of flow control structures must be sealed by a professional engineer, registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia. If applicable, the Director of T&ES may require resubmission of all plans that do not meet this standard. (T&ES)
37. Provide a narrative describing how the project will comply with the stormwater quantity and quality requirements of Article XIII of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance.
38. Provide pre and post development, two and ten year storm water computations for the entire site. (T&ES)
39. The existing storm sewer outfall information is conflicting. The plan shows two outfall pipes one 10" and one 8". The profile shows the outfall being the 10", however the invert out on the plan shows that the 8" pipe invert out is lower than the 10" invert and will be the actual outfall pipe. Provide more information on the existing 8" outfall pipe at the existing catch basin. (T&ES)
40. A 12" pipe is shown to tie into an 8" pipe outfall. Please clarify. (T&ES)
41. All storm sewer pipe shall be RCP Class IV. (T&ES)
42. Provide all pedestrian and traffic signage to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES. (T&ES)
43. Plan must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES that adequate stormwater outfall is available to the site or else developer is to design and build any on or off site improvements to discharge to an adequate outfall. (T&ES)
44. All driveway entrances and sidewalks in public ROW or abutting public ROW shall meet City standards. (T&ES)
45. Show all existing and proposed easements, both public and private. (T&ES)
46. Provide horizontal and vertical sight distance at both entrances. (T&ES)
47. Replace existing curb and gutter, sidewalks, and handicap ramps that are in disrepair or broken. (T&ES)

48. Prior to the release of the final site plan, provide a Traffic Control Plan for construction detailing proposed controls to traffic movement, lane closures, construction entrances, haul routes, and storage and staging. (T&ES)
49. All Traffic Control Device design plans, Work Zone Traffic Control plans, and Traffic Studies shall be sealed by a professional engineer, registered in the Commonwealth of Virginia. (T&ES)
50. Provide proposed elevations (contours and spot shots) in sufficient details on grading plan to clearly show the drainage patterns. (T&ES)
51. Provide a drainage map for the area flowing to the chosen stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs), including topographic information and storm drains. (T&ES)
52. The stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) required for this project shall be constructed and installed under the direct supervision of the design professional or his designated representative. Prior to release of the performance bond, the design professional shall submit a written certification to the Director of T&ES that the BMPs are:
 - a. Constructed and installed as designed and in accordance with the approved Final Site Plan.
 - b. Clean and free of debris, soil, and litter by either having been installed or brought into service after the site was stabilized. (T&ES)
53. The surface appurtenances associated with the on-site structural stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be marked to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES to identify them as part of a structural BMP system. (T&ES)
54. For any surface-installed stormwater Best Management Practice (BMP), i.e. Bio-Retention Filters, Vegetated Swales, etc. that are employed for this site, descriptive signage for the BMPs is required to be installed to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES. (T&ES)
55. Prior to approval of the final site plan, the applicant shall execute and submit a maintenance agreement with the City for the stormwater quality Best Management Practices (BMPs). (T&ES)
56. The applicant shall be responsible for maintaining stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) until sale to an owner, if applicable. Prior to transferring responsibility for the BMPs to the owner, the applicant shall execute a maintenance service contract with a private contractor for a minimum of three years. A copy of the contract shall also be placed in the BMP Operation and Maintenance Manual. Prior to release of the performance bond, a copy of the contract shall be submitted to the City. (T&ES)

57. The applicant shall furnish the owner, if applicable, with an Owner's Operation and Maintenance Manual for all the Best Management Practices (BMPs) used on site. The manual shall include at a minimum: an explanation of the functions and operations of the BMP(s); drawings and diagrams of the BMP(s) and any supporting utilities; catalog cuts on maintenance requirements; manufacturer contact names and phone numbers; a copy of the executed maintenance service contract; and a copy of the maintenance agreement with the City. Prior to release of the performance bond, a copy of the Operation and Maintenance Manual shall be submitted to the City on a digital media. (T&ES)
58. Due to the historic uses at the site and the potential for contamination, the following condition is included. The applicant shall design and install a vapor barrier and ventilation system for the buildings and parking areas to prevent the migration or accumulation of methane or other gases under parking areas or into buildings, or conduct a study and provide a report signed by a professional engineer showing that such measures are not needed to the satisfaction of Directors of T&ES and Code Enforcement. (T&ES)
59. Prior to final site plan (FSP) approval, the following items shall be submitted (five copies) and approved by the Director of T&ES:
 - a. Site Characterization Report/Extent of Contamination Study detailing the location, the contaminants, and the estimated quantity of any contaminated soils and/or groundwater at or in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site.
 - b. Risk Assessment indicating any risks associated with the contamination.
 - c. Remediation Plan detailing how any contaminated soils &/or groundwater will be dealt with, including plans to remediate utility corridors. Clean backfill shall be used to fill the utility corridors. The remediation plan must be included in the FSP.
 - d. Health and Safety Plan indicating measures to be taken during any remediation and/or construction to minimize the potential risks to workers, the neighborhood, and the environment. (T&ES)
60. During the construction phase of this development, the site developer, its contractor, certified land disturber, or owner's other agents shall implement a waste and refuse control program. This program shall control wastes such as discarded building materials, concrete truck washout, chemicals, litter or trash, trash generated by construction workers or mobile food vendor businesses serving them and sanitary waste at the construction site and prevent its off site migration that may cause adverse impacts to the neighboring properties or the environment to the satisfaction of Directors of Transportation and Environmental Services and Code Enforcement. All wastes shall be disposed off site properly in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws. (T&ES)
61. The water quality BMP does not satisfy the requirements of Article XIII of the Zoning Ordinance. The project must provide an on-site BMP to treat the stormwater in accordance with Article XIII. (T&ES)

62. The project lies within the Combined Sewer District thus stormwater management and compliance with the City's Chesapeake Bay program must be coordinated with City's policy for management of the Combined Sewer District. (T&ES)
63. The stormwater collection system is part of the Potomac River watershed. All on-site stormwater curb inlets and public curb inlets within 50 feet of the property line shall be duly marked to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES. (T&ES)
64. All stairs shall extend thru the roof so that door access to the roof is provided for emergency access. (Code)

CITY DEPARTMENT CODE COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- C- 1 Bond for the public improvements must be posted prior to release of the plan.
- C- 2 All downspouts must be connected to a storm sewer by continuous underground pipe.
- C- 3 The sewer tap fee must be paid prior to release of the plan.
- C- 4 All easements and/or dedications must be recorded prior to release of the plan.
- C- 5 Plans and profiles of utilities and roads in public easements and/or public right-of-way must be approved prior to release of the plan.
- C- 6 All drainage facilities must be designed to the satisfaction of T&ES. Drainage divide maps and computations must be provided for approval.
- C- 7 All utilities serving this site to be underground.
- C- 8 Provide site lighting plan to meet minimum city standards.
- C- 9 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.
- C- 10 The applicant must comply with the Article XIII of the City's zoning ordinance, which includes requirements for stormwater pollutant load reductions, treatment of the water quality volume default, and stormwater quantity management.
- C- 11 The applicant must comply with the City of Alexandria, Erosion and Sediment Control Code, Section 5, Chapter 4. This includes naming a Responsible Land Disturber on the Erosion and Sediment Control sheets prior to engaging in land disturbing activities in accordance with Virginia Erosion and Sediment Control Law.
- C- 12 All required permits from Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, Virginia Marine Resources must be in place for all project construction and mitigation work prior to release of the final site plan. This includes the new state requirement for a VPDES permit for all construction activities greater than 1 acre.

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Prior to the issuance of a demolition permit or land disturbance permit, a rodent abatement plan shall be submitted to Code Enforcement that will outline the steps that will taken to prevent the spread of rodents from the construction site to the surrounding community and sewers.
- C-2 Roof drainage systems must be installed so as neither to impact upon, nor cause erosion/damage to adjacent property.
- C-3 Sheeting and shoring shall not extend beyond the property line; except when the developer has obtained a written release from adjacent property owners which has been recorded in the land records; or through an approved encroachment process.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 The developer shall provide a building code analysis with the following building code data on the plan: a) use group; b) number of stories; c) type of construction; d) floor area per floor ; e) fire protection plan.
- C-6 Prior to submission of the Final Site Plan, the developer shall provide a fire flow analysis by a certified licensed fire protection engineer to assure adequate water supply for the structure being considered.
- C-7 A Certificate of occupancy shall be obtained prior to any occupancy of the building or portion thereof, in accordance with USBC 118.0.
- C-8 All exterior walls within 3 feet from an interior property line shall have a fire resistance rating of 1 hour, from both sides, with no openings permitted within the wall. As alternative, a 2 hour fire wall may be provided.
- C-9 This structure contains mixed use groups [M, Mercantile; B, Business; S-2, Low-Hazard Storage (public garage, group 2) and is subject to the mixed use and occupancy requirements of USBC.
- C-10 Required exits, parking, and facilities shall be accessible for persons with disabilities.
- C-11 The public parking garage (Use Group S-2) is required to be equipped with a sprinkler system (USBC).

- C-12 The public parking garage floor must comply with USBC and drain through oil separators or traps to avoid accumulation of explosive vapors in building drains or sewers as provided for in the plumbing code (USBC).
- C-13 Enclosed parking garages must be ventilated in accordance with USBC.
- C-14 A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

Archaeology:

- F-1 During the nineteenth century, the Alexandria Canal Company owned much of this property with the exception of a small strip along the southern edge parallel to Montgomery Street. In 1877, the Hopkins Insurance map shows belonging to Richard Burke in this southern strip. Buildings associated with the canal were situated on the property to the west of this lot, and Powhatan Street was the Alexandria and Washington Turnpike with a railroad track running down the west side. In the twentieth century, the property was part of the Smoot Planing Mill, and some of the mill structures were replaced by a service station. This twentieth-century development would probably have destroyed evidence of most of the nineteenth-century activity on the lot, but it may be possible that portions of some deep features, such as a well or privy, could remain intact.
- C-1 Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-838-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, railroad tracks or ties, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds.
- C-2 The above statement must appear in the General Notes of the site plan so that on-site contractors are aware of the requirement.

Parks and Recreation:

No code comments.