

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION

Building & Planning Committee

Issue Briefing

Topic: Tentative Sketch Plan, 9 Presidential Boulevard, Bala Cynwyd

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Date: June 8, 2018

I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:

Approval of a Tentative Sketch Plan for 9 Presidential Boulevard, Bala Cynwyd. The plan shows the demolition of the existing building and the construction of a four-story, mixed-use building containing 12,649 square feet of ground floor retail, 173 apartments, and two levels of underground parking containing 251 parking spaces with two access driveways onto Presidential Boulevard.

II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:

The Board of Commissioners must review and render decisions on all land development applications.

III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):

N/A

IV. Other Relevant Background Information:

On April 2, 2018, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the application subject to certain conditions. The Planning Commission raised several concerns with the layout of the proposal including the relationship of the public walkway and multi-purpose path which were separated by a large retaining wall due to the slope of Presidential Boulevard. Additional concerns included the consistency with Code requirements related to building orientation and the permitted Floor Area Ratio. The applicant met with staff and the Ward Commissioner on three occasions to discuss the outstanding issues. On June 6, 2018 the applicant submitted revised plans which will be presented at the meeting. A summary of the issues and subsequent changes to the plans is provided below.

The applicant also requested Conditional Use approval under §155-217.D.(1)(d) to have a second driveway access onto Presidential Boulevard. The CAD-RCA permits a second curb cut by conditional use when it facilitates a shared parking arrangement on adjacent lots. The plan shows a 24-foot-wide access easement along the shared property line with 1 Presidential Boulevard

Pedestrian Access and Building Orientation

When reviewed by the Planning Commission, the proposal included a large retaining wall along the northern frontage of the site along Presidential Boulevard which bisected the required multipurpose path from the public walkway. The purpose of the CAD-RCA Development Design Standards is to require pedestrian-oriented

buildings and to require building entrances that are oriented toward streets, sidewalks and/or public accessways. Requirements for orientation and primary entrances are intended to:

- Provide for safe, convenient, direct and accessible pedestrian access to and from public sidewalks, transit facilities and crosswalks
- Provide safe and efficient pedestrian connections between buildings

To address these concerns the plan was revised in the following ways:

1. The building footprint has not changed however the size of the proposed retail space has increased from 7,009 square feet to 12,649 square feet.
2. The retaining wall shown along the property frontage has been significantly reduced in height and length and no longer separates the multipurpose pathway and the sidewalk but rather the face of the building acts as a retaining wall.
3. The retail located along the front façade has been reoriented to contain three spaces at separate elevations as follows:
 - a. A two-story retail space at the north entrance at the lower level garage
 - b. A retail space at the center of the building (elevation 201)
 - c. A retail space at the south façade (elevation 204)

Floor Area Ratio

The zoning chart was revised to show which incentives under §155-217.E. will be used to achieve the proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.6. The applicant has revised the plan as follows:

1. Included an updated FAR calculation
2. Eliminated the use of the incentive associated with wrapped parking
3. Added the incentive for structured parking
4. Provided graphics supporting the FAR incentives associated with both structured and underground parking

Based on a review of the revised plans, staff recommends the following revisions to the conditions of approval recommended by the Planning Commission should the Building and Planning Committee decide to recommend approval of the plan. Staff's recommended additions and deletions are noted in bold faced text. If a condition is proposed to be deleted, the issue has been addressed on the revised plans.

The application requires the following relief which has been recommended for approval by the Planning Commission:

- A. Natural Features Code Section §101-5.C.(1) and (2) to allow +/- 350 square feet of the proposed building footprint to extend into an area of steep slopes.

Township Engineer's Review:

1. The Township Engineer's review letter dated March 22, 2018 shall be incorporated by reference into these conditions of approval.

Conditional Use:

2. The applicant shall demonstrate how the proposed second curb cut facilitates a shared parking arrangement.

3. The applicant shall obtain Conditional Use approval and shall comply with any conditions imposed on that approval. Any conditions shall be included on the Final Plan.

Floor Area Ratio/Architectural Elevations:

- ~~4. The applicant shall investigate refining the architecture to address the unique site conditions and the topography of the site including better integrating the impact of the large wall on the north elevation.~~
- ~~4. The zoning chart shall be revised to show which incentives under §155-217.E. are used to achieve the proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.6.~~

5. Elevations and renderings of all sides of the proposed building and the parking garage, including a list of materials, shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan.

- ~~6. The applicant shall investigate reducing the height of the retaining wall along Presidential Boulevard.~~

- ~~7.6.~~ The applicant shall clarify whether the interior courtyard has been included in the building area calculations.

- ~~8.7.~~ The mean grade of the structure shall be calculated and shown on the Preliminary Plan. The architectural plans shall be coordinated with and shall comply with the grading proposed with this application.

Landscape Plan:

- ~~9.8.~~ The applicant shall provide a chart indicating how the proposal complies with the greening standards contained in Subdivision & Land Development Code Section 135-41.4.

- ~~10.9.~~ A landscape plan complying with Code Sections 101-9, 135-41.4, 135-30 and conditions herein shall be prepared and sealed by a Registered Landscape Architect and submitted with the Preliminary Plan.

- ~~11.10.~~ If any recreation area will be provided for the project, it shall be shown on the landscape plan.

- ~~12.11.~~ Slope percentages shall be added to the plan.

- ~~13.12.~~ Details on how areas associated with the Official Map will be used shall be included with the Preliminary Plan.

Pedestrian Circulation:

- ~~14.13.~~ A pedestrian circulation plan shall be provided with the Preliminary Plan to identify any gaps in the pedestrian circulation throughout the site.

- ~~15.14.~~ Details of the multipurpose path and public walkway shall be provided on the Preliminary plan including the material of the two-foot hardscaped verge.

- ~~16.15.~~ The applicant shall refine how the proposed public walkway and multipurpose path connect to the existing sidewalks on the adjoining properties on the Preliminary Plan.

Traffic, Circulation & Parking:

- ~~17.~~16. The six-foot-wide landscaped area required by §155-217. D.(1)(c) shall be provided adjacent to the proposed move-in/move out parking space on the southern side of the building.
- ~~18. The applicant shall demonstrate that 50% of the parking structure is below grade to qualify for the parking reduction in §155-217.D.3.b.~~
- ~~19.~~17. The internal layout of the parking garage shall be provided with the Preliminary Plan submission.
- ~~20.~~18. Details for the design of the access drive proposed in the twenty-four (24') foot wide easement to 1 Presidential Boulevard shall be provided including additional traffic analysis to fully evaluate the redistribution of traffic.
- ~~21.~~19. Per §155-217.D.(6)(b) four (4) car share spaces shall be provided and the location shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.
- ~~22.~~20. Per §155-217.D.(7), twenty (20) bicycle parking spaces shall be provided and the location shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.
- ~~23. A parking chart per §155-217.D.3.a shall be added to the Plan.~~
- ~~24.~~21. The location of all service and loading functions shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.
- ~~25.~~22. The applicant shall consider eliminating the southerly curb-cut and formalizing a shared parking arrangement with 1 Presidential Boulevard.
- ~~26.~~23. Stop bars and centerline pavement markings shall be provided as required to provide safe and efficient movement of traffic. All traffic control signage shall be provided on a "Signage and Pavement Marking" Plan.
- ~~27.~~24. Maneuverability diagrams shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan. Adequate turning radii for all vehicle movements shall be documented, including fire truck access, and maneuverability shall be fully documented to be adequate if/as required by the Fire Marshal.
- ~~28.~~25. A traffic impact study shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan that fully evaluates the proposed driveways. The levels of service shall be evaluated. The applicant shall contact the Township Engineer's office to discuss and develop the assumptions that will be used in the analysis. The increase in PM peak trip generation shall be evaluated.
- ~~29.~~26. The actual sight distance triangles shall be shown for each driveway. The sight distance shall meet the minimum safe stopping distance required by PennDOT Publication Title 67, Chapter 441. Calculations shall be provided as necessary. It shall be noted what improvements are necessary to be performed to achieve the required sight distance. The final configuration of the drive shall be subject to the approval of The Traffic Safety Unit of the Lower Merion Police Department.
- ~~30.~~27. 'No Stopping or Standing' signs shall be provided along the roadway in front of the property.
- ~~31.~~28. The plans shall be revised to show the location of the right of way associated with Interstate 76, the Schuylkill Expressway.

Stormwater Management & Erosion Control:

~~32.29.~~ The applicant shall investigate stormwater best management practices (BMPs) for the surface parking area, such as breaks in the curbing to allow for stormwater infiltration.

~~33.30.~~ Erosion control measures that conform to Township standards shall be provided on the Preliminary Plan.

~~34.31.~~ A soil stockpile location shall be provided on the Preliminary Plan.

~~35.32.~~ A note shall be added to the plan indicating that the Township Engineer shall be notified 48 hours prior to the installation of any seepage bed and prior to the start of earthmoving activities.

Utilities:

~~36.33.~~ The location of all transformers and utility boxes shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.

~~37.34.~~ The location of the existing sanitary laterals shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.

~~38.35.~~ The location, size, material, and slope of the proposed sanitary lateral(s) shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.

~~39.36.~~ The location of the proposed utility services shall be provided on the Preliminary Plan.

~~40.37.~~ The existing sanitary sewers shall be shown to within two hundred (200) feet of the development.

~~41.38.~~ All existing utility service locations shall be shown on the Preliminary Plan.

~~42.39.~~ The location of existing storm sewers including the size, slope, and material of all storm sewers within two hundred (200) feet shall be provided on the Preliminary Plan.

Construction Details:

~~43.40.~~ Full reveal and depressed curb details shall be provided on the Preliminary Plan.

~~44.41.~~ Depressed curb and concrete apron shall be indicated at the driveway access locations. The length of depressed curb shall be dimensioned on the Preliminary Plan. The radii at the aprons shall be dimensioned on the Preliminary Plan and demonstrated to be adequate.

~~45.42.~~ Curb shall be noted on the plan to be repaired/replaced at the direction of the Township.

~~46.43.~~ Details of the concrete apron and sidewalk that conform to Township standards shall be provided on the Preliminary Plan.

~~47.44.~~ A detail of any proposed retaining walls shall be provided. Calculations shall be provided for wall clear heights exceeding four (4') feet or for walls with equivalent surcharge loading if/as applicable.

Standard Conditions of Approval:

~~48.45.~~ An existing conditions plan shall be included with the Preliminary Plan submission.

~~49.46.~~ The existing and proposed impervious surface and building area shall be clearly tabulated/itemized on the Plan and shall be listed as a percentage and in square feet.

~~50.47.~~ A lighting plan shall be submitted with the Preliminary Plan. The location, luminaire type, wattage, pole height and illumination patterns shall be indicated. The lighting shall be designed to reduce the off-site transmission of light, to shield the source of illumination and to prevent glare on adjacent properties.

~~51.48.~~ Revisions to the plan shall address the Township Engineer's March 22, 2018 review letter.

~~52.49.~~ A copy of the revised plan shall be submitted with any changes highlighted. A letter shall also be provided with the revised plan indicating how each requested revision has been addressed in the re-submission.

~~53.50.~~ Approval of this Tentative Sketch Plan does not ensure that the developer or the owner can ultimately develop the property as shown on the plan. The proposed development's compliance with various Township ordinances, including but not limited to the Natural Features Conservation Code shall not be determined until the applicant submits a Preliminary Plan for Township approval.

~~54.51.~~ The Preliminary Plan, complying with all applicable conditions of approval, shall be filed with the Department of Building and Planning within twelve (12) months from the date of approval by the Board of Commissioners.

~~55.52.~~ The owner shall make payment of fees and expenses of the Township's professional consultants who perform services on behalf of the Township with respect to these plans and the work contemplated thereunder and will establish and maintain with the Township those escrows for the payment of such fees required by Township Code. Owner agrees that any statement from the Township for such fees which remain unpaid for a period of 30 days may be recorded against the property as a municipal lien.

~~56.53.~~ The owner shall make payment of the Township Engineer's inspection fees within 30 days of presentation. A penalty of 1.5% per month will be due for late payments from the date of presentation. If any shares are not paid within 60 days of presentation, the Township may elect to suspend any outstanding permits until all pending charges are settled.

~~57.54.~~ The property owner(s) shall comply with all applicable federal, state, county, local and Lower Merion Township ordinances and laws regardless of specific mention herein.

V. Impact On Township Finances:

While the construction of the building proposed in this application will have an impact on Township finances, staff is unable to determine the impact at this time.

VI. Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Board approve the application subject to the changes to the conditions noted above.