

August 18, 2015

Jim Roberts, Urban Planner
Department of Planning & Zoning
301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Re: DSUP2014-0019
1800 Mount Vernon Completeness Review

COMMENT RESPONSE LETTER

The following is in response to the list of comments and recommendations made on the most recent review of the above referenced plan.

PLANNING AND ZONING

Recommendations:

Completeness Items

Comment 1: The lot(s) shown in the current submission do not match the information in the City's Real Estate records, and the boundary between 1800 and 1800 R is shown differently on various sheets within the current submission (for example, the plat and existing conditions sheet do not correspond to A100 or the cover sheet Vicinity Map). Provide a title report for the subject lot(s) to determine the status of the lot(s) and their boundaries.

- a) Please include deed book and page numbers in the response.
- b) Coordinate the boundary information within the submission sheets. (GIS / Real Estate / PZ)

Response: Based on boundary survey and review of the deeds, the tax parcels are accurately depicted on the site plan and consolidation plat. The city GIS records do not accurately reflect the property lines between the two parcels. A copy of the title report for the two parcels was provided to GIS.

Comment 2: Comment from the previous submission carried forward: The proposed development will require the consolidation of 1800 and 1800R Mount Vernon Avenue. Section 6-606(D)(c) requires the applicant to demonstrate that the proposed development achieves a

design consistent with and meets the goals of the form based development standards to a greater extent than would occur without consolidation and that the impact on adjoining residential development is no greater than would occur without consolidation. If the title report identifies 1800R as a separate legal lot, work with staff to determine whether the property at 1800R will need to be rezoned to the Mount Vernon Urban Overlay Zone.

Response: *Staff has determined that parcel 1800R does not need to be rezoned and upon consolidation will automatically be subject to the Mount Vernon Avenue Overlay Zone regulations.*

Comment 3: Staff considers that there is inadequate parking for the proposed development. The parking requirement appears to have increased due to additional units being proposed together with a larger retail area than presented in the applicants 12/9/14 proposal. Provide additional parking, or agreement for off-site parking, for the retail proposed. Alternatively consider a reduction in the proposed development intensity to meet the parking available.

Response: *The applicant and staff will continue to discuss parking for the project.*

Comment 4: Zoning Tabulations on the cover sheet: Amend to be per the Mount Vernon Overlay zone per the proposed development.

Response: *Zoning Tabulations have been revised to reflect only the requirements for the Mount Vernon Overlay Zone, see sheet 1.*

Comment 5: Design Guidelines: Per the Completeness Checklist, 'If located along Mount Vernon Avenue, information requested by the Mount Vernon Avenue Design guidelines, including information necessary to assess compliance with the guidelines.' Include the relevant information in legible format within the cover sheet zoning tabulation and references to graphics within the sheet submission.

Response: *Zoning Tabulations have been revised to reference Mount Vernon Avenue Overlay Zone compliance within the plan submission, see zoning tabulations on sheet 1 (specifically item 17 under zoning tabulations).*

Comment 6: Amend the parking calculations in the Zoning Tabulations to reflect the new ratios allowable for multi-family construction.

Response: *Parking calculations have been updated, see sheet 1.*

Comment 7: Vicinity Map on cover sheet and Contextual Plan on Sheet 2: amend to include the correct site property lines.

Response: Vicinity map has been updated to reflect correct boundary lines, see sheet 1.

Comment 8: Existing conditions map:
a) Add the extents of the existing parking lane or parking spaces

Response: Parking lane extents have been added, see sheets 3-5.

b) Zone transition lines – the Mount Vernon Overlay Zone is not shown

Response: Existing Mount Vernon Overlay Zone line has been added, see sheet 3.

c) Provide the north and east property line dimensions (update all other associated sheets accordingly)

Response: All property line bearings and distances are provided on sheets 3 and 5. Text may be offset for plan review clarity and legibility.

d) Add bus stop information

Response: Bus stop located along the east side of Mount Vernon Avenue just north of East Mason Avenue has been added, see sheets 3 and 4.

Comment 9: Preliminary Site Plan:
a) Show the proposed extent of the Mount Vernon Overlay (MVO) Zone and existing MVO on adjacent parcels.

Response: Proposed MVO Zone boundary line has been added, see sheet 4.

b) Add the extents of the on street parking lane or parking spaces

Response: Parking lane extents have been added, see sheets 3-5.

c) Add canopies and overhangs. Adjust building dimensions and open space calculation accordingly

Response: Building overhangs have been added, see sheet 4. Open space calculations have been revised, see sheets 1 and 2.

d) Add bus stop information.

Response: Bus stop located along the east side of Mount Vernon Avenue just north of East Mason Avenue has been added, see sheets 3 and 4.

Comment 10: Landscape Plan: Indicate protection measures for the offsite trees on adjacent rear properties.

Response: Per conversation with city staff, design has been revised to allow 17-20 feet of undisturbed area from center of existing trees. Details of walkway added with minimal impact on tree roots. Tree protection fencing to be used to protect area that is not to be disturbed.

Comment 11: Open Space Plan: Amend the open space plan and calculation to ensure only areas which qualify under the ZO definition of open space are included. e.g. the areas below overhangs shall be excluded.

Response: Building overhangs have been added, see sheet 4. Open space calculations have been revised to exclude overhangs, see sheets 1 and 2.

Comment 12: Lighting/Signage Plan

a) Provide a plan identifying the lighting for the project

Response: Proposed site lighting called out on sheets L1.01 and L1.02. Existing street lighting to remain, existing fixtures called out in detail on sheet L1.01.

b) Provide an exhibit which shows the location and size of the proposed signage to enable assessment of compliance with the zoning ordinance.

Response: Signage is not proposed with this application.

Comment 13: DSUP application form – provide the required ‘Parking and Access Requirements’ information on the form. The current submission is insufficient.

Response: Response to be updated as part of ongoing discussions with staff concerning parking for the project.

Comment 14: DSUP application form and sheet submission: Provide a narrative with accompanying graphics as necessary to describe how and where operations such as loading/unloading, residential move-ins and trash collections shall be accommodated. The narrative shall include frequency of operations. The current description in the application is incomplete.

Response: Loading will occur on Mount Vernon Avenue and move-ins will be scheduled with the building management. Trash will be wheeled out and collected on Mount Vernon Avenue, see Vehicle Turning Movement Note on sheet 4.

Comment 15: Parking reduction application: Provide items 5 and 6 from the SUP parking reduction application form. The current submission is insufficient.

Response: The application will be updated based on continued discussions with staff.

Comment 16: Subsequent to verifying the lot boundaries as required amend the descriptions given in the justifications for the lot consolidation and deviations from the form-based Code provisions which state that the rear lot would be classified as Tier 1. Based on the size of the lots under the current submission, 1800R would be a Tier 2 and 1800 would be Tier 3. The tier classification impacts the extent of the justification provided by the applicant. Per ZO 6-606 the applicant is require to demonstrate by clear and convincing justification for the consolidation of lots.

Response: 1800R definition has been amended.

Comment 17: Verify why and how the gross and net floor areas of the building have increased since the previous submission.

Response: The GFA and NFA have been modified and updated due to changes based on a refinement of the design, input from the community and input from City staff.

Comment 18: Sheet 5 / A700 and all associated sheets: the rear setback is dimensioned as 41 feet on the Dimension Plan, but shown as c.37' on the architecture sheets. Please coordinate.

Response: Rear setback has been coordinated and is consistently depicted as 41.0', see sheets 5, A700, and A701.

Comment 19: Comment from the previous submission carried forward: Section 7-1006(A) requires a 10' setback from the front property line. Note, aside from the pilasters, the prevailing façade is dimensioned to be 9.9 feet rather than the required 10 feet, please amend. (Dev/ Zoning)

Response: Dimensions to front building façade has been revised to 10.0', see sheet 5.

Comment 20: Add property lines to the architectural sections.

Response: Property lines have been added, see sheets A700 and A701.

Comment 21: Amend the Special Use Permits/Zoning Modifications table accordingly:

- a) If rezoning is proposed, add the re-zoning request.
- b) In the Overlay district, non-compliant development requests are termed 'Deviations' per 6-606, amend the language accordingly

Response: Per coordination with city staff, a rezoning is not required for an overlay zone. Overlay district language has been revised accordingly, see sheet 1.

Comment 22: Revise the roof design to fully meet the intention of the MVABAP allowance for height forms (e.g. vaulted roof) up to 45 ft. Staff does not consider that the criteria have been met.

Response: We believe we have met the criteria, as demonstrated on 3/A400, by using angled roof trusses and providing a volume space below those angled roof trusses. The MVABAP states on Pg93 – “unique roof designs”...”such as angled or curved trusses which create ‘loft-type’ volume spaces.”

Definition of lofts:

- a. a room, storage area, or the like within a sloping roof, attic, garrett*
- b. a room or space that is just below the roof of a building and that is often used to store things*
- c. an upper room or floor*

Comment 23: Building height measurements must take into account the parapet. The parapet is considered under the MVABAP to count towards maximum height.

Response: The maximum height to the top of the parapet is 45'-0". Drawings have been revised to demonstrate compliance, see sheets A400-A701.

Comment 24: Per section 2, A701 the second and fourth floor does not appear to meet the rear setback requirement, with the parapets failing to meet the setback line, please amend.

Response: Acknowledged and amended, see sheets A701.

Non-Completeness / Design

Comment 25: Comment from the previous submission carried forward: Provide additional details of how the open space to the rear remains publicly visibly, particularly on the walkway along the north façade, The illustrations on A103 showing the tall privacy fences severely limits the visibility at this location.

Response: Opaque walls reduced to a 34" height retaining wall with metal picket fencing on top allows for visibility down 15' walkway to open space. Small planter placed in front to soften wall and provide buffer between patio and outdoor café space. Patio fencing in 15' walkway is to be picket

fencing as to increase transparency down walkway and to provide unit security. See sheet L1.01 for plan view and sheet L1.05 for details of wall and fence.

Comment 26: Revise the design of the landscape in the rear to provide sufficient tree protection to the trees on the neighboring sites.

Response: Per conversation with city staff, design has been revised to allow 17-20 feet of undisturbed area from center of existing trees. Details of walkway added with minimal impact on tree roots. Tree protection fencing to be used to protect area that is not to be disturbed.

BAR/Historic Preservation

Comment 27: The building is located one block outside of the boundaries of the Town of Potomac National Register District.

Response: Acknowledged.

Comment 28: As part of the Del Ray Historic Preservation project, the City researched 15 Art Deco & Streamline Moderne buildings in Del Ray, including the building at 1800 Mt. Vernon Avenue. The research was compiled in a draft National Register Nomination Form in the hopes that these buildings could eventually be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The buildings cannot be evaluated by the State Historic Preservation Office for potential eligibility without owner approval; the owner of 1800 Mt. Vernon Avenue has elected not to have the building's eligibility considered.

Response: Acknowledged.

Comment 29: Constructed in 1941 as an Acme grocery store and designed by the Turkish-born architect Mihran Mesrobian, 1800 Mt. Vernon Avenue is a good example of an Art Deco commercial building. Mesrobian is known primarily for his design of luxury hotels in the city, including the Carlton Hotel (1926), the Hays-Adams Hotel (1927), and the Wardman Tower and Arcade (1928). Of the 15 buildings surveyed, the Arlandria Floors building is the only one designed by a prominent architect.

Response: Acknowledged.

Comment 30: The Land Use Recommendation section of the Mount Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan encourages the retention of historic buildings. The plan also recommends reuse and/or retention of the Arlandria Floors building if it structurally feasible. As the front façade is the character

defining feature of the building, its retention - or reconstruction, using the historic brick- should be strongly encouraged.

Response: Attempts will be made to re-use façade details, if possible, given the poor condition of the existing materials. The potential reuse details and locations are shown on A104.

Transportation & Environmental Services

Finding:

Comment 31: Sheet 8 of 11: It is understood that the size and direction of flow presented on the storm sewer system is based on actual field survey. If this is not true then the submitting engineer will provide the information based on actual field survey since the information provided is not matching with the City of Alexandria GIS system. (I-ROW)

Response: Actual field survey for the existing storm sewer system is provided for all storm depicted on sheet 3 which includes up to the existing 24" downstream outfall pipe that extends from the existing curb inlet located at the southeast corner of Mount Vernon Avenue and East Mason Avenue. All storm sewer information downstream from the existing 24" pipe is based on the City of Alexandria GIS system.

Recommendations (Completeness comments that must be addressed with the next submission):

Comment 32: Sheet 3 of 11: 'Utility Ownership Information', Sanitary and Storm: Since Yon Lambert neither as Deputy Director, Operations nor as Director, T&ES has been affiliated to ASA with the address: Alexandria Sanitation Authority, 1500 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314, therefore, amend the contact information both for Sanitary and Storm as following: (I-ROW)

Response: Utility Ownership note has been amended, see sheet 3.

Comment 33: The submitting engineer can refer to Memorandum to Industry 02-09, Design Guidelines for Site Plan Preparation, dated December 3, 2009 and use it as a resource to complete the next submission of Site Plan. This memo is available at the City's following web address: (I-ROW)

Response: Acknowledged.

Comment 34: Sheet 9 of 11: The existing peak flows were provided to the applicant by the City. Please add the peak flows generated from the proposed development to the existing flows that were provided. (I-ROW)

Response: The existing sanitary sewer outfall analysis has been previously coordinated with city staff. All revisions have been incorporated into the current submission set, see sheet 9.

Comment 35: Sheet 9 of 11: The total number of residential units and non-residential square feet do not match the City's GIS Building layer. Please use the building layer to determine existing density and to compute existing flows not previously provided by the City (i.e. upstream of manhole W). (I-ROW)

Response: The existing sanitary sewer outfall analysis has been previously coordinated with city staff. All revisions have been incorporated into the current submission set, see sheet 9.

Comment 36: Sheet 9 of 11: Please ensure that flow inputs into the sanitary sewer are allocated at the upstream manhole, not the downstream manhole. (I-ROW)

Response: The existing sanitary sewer outfall analysis has been previously coordinated with city staff. All revisions have been incorporated into the current submission set, see sheet 9.

Comment 37: Sheet 9 of 11: Per the City's Memo to Industry 06-14 part 5f, provide a profile of the hydraulic grade line. For the HGL calculations, include the pipe crown elevation and the surcharge depth over the crown. The HGL must be contained within the pipe. (I-ROW)

Response: The existing sanitary sewer outfall analysis has been previously coordinated with city staff. All revisions have been incorporated into the current submission set, see sheet 9.

Comment 38: Sheet 6 of 8: It is acknowledged that the computations show a small decrease in storm water runoff generation. Since the storm water under post development condition will be discharged as concentrated flow in to the storm sewer while under the pre development condition, storm water is just sheet flowing and drains wherever the capacity is available. It is, therefore, recommended to provide detention or bio-retention to provide water quantity and quality treatment. (I-ROW)

Response: Due to the vast infrastructure improvements provided with this application (475 linear feet of 18" storm sewer piping within public right-of-way), additional water quality/quantity measures are not proposed.

Comment 39: With a 12% slope on garage, winter treatment must be provided. Update the plan with the next submission. (I-ROW)

Response: Winter treatment will be provided and is noted on 2/A200.

Comment 40: The sidewalk must be 5' clear, unobstructed, and continuous. Update the plan with the next submission. (I-ROW)

Response: The minimum sidewalk width within the public right-of-way is 5' as depicted on sheet 5. The minimum sidewalk width provided to the proposed building façade is 13.8' as shown on sheet 5.

Comment 41: A minimum of 54 spaces is required for the residential component of the building (based on the new multifamily parking requirements with 5% credits taken for 4+ bus routes and a Walkscore of 89) and 13 spaces are required for the retail component, for a total of 67 spaces. Staff does not support a reduction to the residential parking requirement. Clarify the parking reduction is for the retail portion of the development. (Transportation Planning)

Response: The proposed application requires 57 residential parking spaces and is proposing 55 residential parking spaces, see sheet 1. Therefore, a parking reduction is required for both the retail and residential components of the building.

Comment 43: Provide a comparison of the parking requirement for restaurant use in the retail area to ensure the most restrictive parking requirement is considered with the request. (Transportation Planning)

Response: A restaurant use is not proposed with this application.

Comment 44: Update the Supplemental Parking Reduction Application to provide a response to #6. (Transportation Planning)

Response: A Transportation Management Plan will be prepared as part of ongoing discussions with staff.

Comment 45: Provide turning movements of trash truck and fire truck. (Transportation)

Response: There is no onsite trash truck or fire truck access proposed with this development. Trash/Fire truck access is provided from Mount Vernon Avenue. See Vehicle Turning Movement Note on sheet 4.

Recommendations (Non-completeness comments that should be addressed with the next submission):

Comment 46: Sheet 7: Water quality requirements in Section 13-109 are two-fold – the phosphorus reduction requirement and the Alexandria water quality volume default. The phosphorus reduction requirements are based on the 1” storm for the site’s impervious and pervious areas, and a fraction of the total site area may be treated to meet the 10% TP reduction requirement. However, the Alexandria water quality volume is calculated as the first ½” of runoff for the entire site’s impervious area. Impervious areas not required to be treated for phosphorus reduction, must be treated to the ½” water quality volume or a fee in lieu must be paid. Given that there are impervious areas not treated, the WQV is not met.

Response: Acknowledged, a fee will be paid for areas of imperviousness not being treated by the proposed BMP facility, see Water Quality/Quantity Compliance Narrative on sheet 7.

Comment 47: Could provide urban bioretention or other means to treat this to the ½” standard. (Storm)

Response: Per coordination with P&Z staff, disturbance within the driplines of the existing offsite trees is undesirable. Also, there is no existing storm outfall system to convey concentrated runoff from the rear of the property. Therefore, due to these justifications as well as the 475 linear feet of 18” storm sewer piping within public right-of-way, additional water quality measures to treat the minor amount of impervious area not treated by the proposed BMP facility is not proposed.

Comment 48: Demonstrate proper sizing of the hydrodynamic device to meet the 1” storm. (Storm)

Response: BMP sizing computations have been added, see sheet 7.

Future Conditions:

Comment 49: Provide bicycle parking per City guidelines. (Transportation Planning)

Response: Area for bike racks is provided within the proposed garage, see sheet 6. A bike rack for visitors is provided within the Mount Vernon Avenue right-of-way, see sheet 5.

Comment 50: Install vehicular pavers for garage entrance. (Transportation Planning)

Response: The proposed concrete garage entrance is consistent with the existing streetscape design for the Mount Vernon Avenue corridor.

Comment 51: Coordinate with property to the south to ensure that the sidewalk crossing the garage entrance is flush. (Transportation Planning)

Response: Proposed garage entrance will be designed to city standards and coordinated with existing entrance to the south to provide a flush sidewalk pathway. Details to be provided with the final site plan submission.

Office of Housing

Comment 52: The applicant should be aware that the City's Affordable Housing Contribution Work Group (AHCWG) recommended new voluntary contribution rates in October 2013. City Council received the AHCWG report in December of 2013. The voluntary contribution formula rates for 2015 are provided in the table below. Please contact the Office of Housing to discuss a contribution for affordable housing.

Response: The applicant anticipates making a voluntary affordable housing contribution per the city's policy.

Code Administration

F – 1: The following comments are for site plan review only. Once the applicant has filed for a building permit and additional information has been provided, code requirements will be based upon the building permit plans and the additional information submitted. If there are any questions, the applicant may contact Charles Cooper, Plan Review Division at Charles.cooper@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4197.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 1: Demolition, building and trades permits are required for this project. Six sets of construction documents sealed by a Registered Design Professional that fully detail the construction as well as layout and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems shall accompany the permit application(s) The building official shall be notified in writing by the owner if the registered design professional in the responsible charge is changed or is unable to continue to perform the duties.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 2: New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 3: A soils report must be submitted with the building permit application.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 4: A Certificate of Occupancy is required prior to occupancy.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 5: Accessible parking will need to be identified on plan. Plan has a non-compliant number of accessible parking spaces. Identify total number of accessible parking spaces.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 6: Standpipe location will need to be identified on plan. Such standpipes shall be extended as construction progresses to within one floor of the highest point of construction having secured decking or flooring.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 7: Accessible dwelling units will need to be identified on preliminary plan if applicable to this R-2 use. Provide addition information on unit types.

Response: Acknowledged.

C – 8: Accessible routes and entrances are required to be identified on plan.

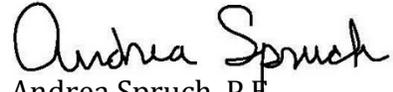
Response: Acknowledged.

C – 9: Transformer volt location will need to identify protection from vehicular impact.

Response: Acknowledged.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you or any member of your Staff has any questions or comments.

Respectfully,
R.C. FIELDS & ASSOCIATES, INC.


Andrea Spruch, P.E.
Project Manager