

Design Review Board Case #2018-0013
2425 Eisenhower Avenue – Block 6C Retail Pad Site

Application	General Data	
Project Name: 2425 Eisenhower Avenue – Block 6C Retail Pad Site Location: 2425 Eisenhower Avenue Applicant: 2425 Eisenhower Acquisitions, LLC	DRB Date:	September 27, 2018
	Site Area:	0.36 acres (15,849 sf)
	Zone:	CDD#2
	Proposed Use:	Residential, Retail, and Associated Parking
	Gross Floor Area:	7,752 square feet
<p>Purpose of Application: Second design concept review of a one-story retail building and site improvements proposed for retail and restaurant uses at 2425 Eisenhower Avenue adjacent to the existing Hoffman Town Center. This proposal includes 7,752 square feet of retail uses.</p>		
<p>Staff Reviewers: Rob Kerns, AICP robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov Thomas H. Canfield, AIA tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov Nathan Imm, nathan.imm@alexandriava.gov Bill Cook, AICP william.cook@alexandriava.gov Anna Franco, anna.franco@alexandriava.gov</p>		
<p>DRB WORK SESSION, JULY 19, 2018: Overall, the Board concurred with the comments summarized in Section V of the Staff Report and motioned to lend approval to the development and direction of the design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the Swamp Fox/Eisenhower corner, there was discussion that a corner entry may not be feasible due to utilities and that reducing the notched corner may be more successful. • Board members had concerns about the visibility of rooftop utilities from all angles and concurred with Staff comments to consider additional height of the curved parapet form and additional screening methods. • The Board encouraged the applicant to consider the western façade and site details pertaining to pedestrian activity and visibility, transformer and service area screening, and context of the adjacent building and entries. The DRB supported the concept suggested by Staff of a pedestrian or transitional treatment for the existing private service/access street. The board thought the corner gesture at the northwest corner deserved additional consideration as a tenant entrance or focal point of activity. • Staff will confirm the setback to be complied with along Eisenhower Avenue. 		

I. OVERVIEW

2425 Eisenhower Acquisitions, LLC is requesting Design Review Board (DRB) **approval** of a new 7,752 square foot retail building at 2425 Eisenhower Avenue (Eisenhower East – Block 6C), in accordance with existing approvals for Block 6C and the Hoffman Town Center. The applicant previously proposed a concept in their application for the July 2018 DRB meeting. The applicant has since continued to work with Staff to refine the proposed site and building design.

Since the development of Block 6C is in Eisenhower East, the DRB’s jurisdiction is advisory, and its’ recommendation for this application will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council for their consideration of the overall development proposal.

II. BACKGROUND

Project Evolution

The subject property, Block 6C (2425 Eisenhower Avenue), is the remaining undeveloped parcel within the original Hoffman Block 6 as identified in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP) when the plan was adopted by City Council in 2003. A subsequent subdivision (SUB#2014-0001) was approved by the Planning Commission in 2015, dividing Eisenhower East Block 6 into three parcels.

Block 6A at 200 Stovall Street was the former “Hoffman Building 2” constructed in 1969 and leased by the General Services Administration for the majority of its existence. City Council approved Development Special Use Permit (DSUP#2017-0015) in October 2017 to convert the property to residential and retail uses, and also approved an associated amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan to allow the land use conversion. The project architecture was reviewed by the DRB in July 2017 and March 2018. Block 6B (2461 Eisenhower Avenue) is the site of a currently unoccupied office building which has been recently renovated.

Site Context

This site is located within Eisenhower East, as part of the Hoffman Town Center, which consists of four blocks (Blocks 6, 7, 8 & 14). Upon the completion of the Block 6A conversion, the three parcels which comprise Block 6 are currently planned to consist of approximately 352,000 square feet of office use, 663,000 square feet of residential use and 69,000 square feet of retail use. The existing AMC movie theater is located on Block 7 and Block 8 is the location of the National Science Foundation’s newly constructed headquarters. Additionally, approximately 3,163 parking spaces are provided within the existing parking garage at Block 14, 250 of which are allocated to Block 6 specifically.

The entirety of Block 6 is located on the north side of Eisenhower Avenue, across from the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station. It is bound by Eisenhower Avenue to the south, Stovall Street to the west, Mandeville Lane to the north, and Swamp Fox Road to the east.

Block 6C is the southern-most parcel within Block 6, located at the northwest corner of Eisenhower Avenue and Swamp Fox Road. Northwest of Block 6C is Block 6B which consists of the existing Hoffman Office Building #1, and to its east a crescent-shaped building with retail, surface parking,

and a pocket park. An existing, interior corridor connects the Block 6B retail and office uses to the residential conversion on Block 6A, which is currently beginning renovations.

An existing service and loading area currently separates Block 6A and the Hoffman Office Building #1 on Block 6B. This area is accessed from Stovall Street and provides service and loading for the existing retail at Block 6B. The area also includes above-grade utilities, such as electrical transformers, and access to the buildings' service corridors.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Building Design

Footprint and Massing

The footprint of the building largely follows the irregular shape of the site. The longest wall of the building is on the south side and fronts on Eisenhower Avenue. Notches in the corners of the building along Swamp Fox Road help transition site angles. A short segment of glass wall extends along Swamp Fox Road from the intersection with Eisenhower Avenue. Then the building transitions to a curved façade along the north side, gradually rising in height from east to west. This curved façade features four of the five tenant entries and storefronts. The north façade also faces the Town Center plaza and surface parking, thus completing the semi-circle facing inward on the west side of Swamp Fox Road.

In response to the DRB's comments that the northwest corner deserves additional consideration as a tenant entrance or focal point of activity, the applicant has revised their proposal so that there is one tenant entry along the west side of the building.

Façade and Overall Building Expression

While not identical to the restaurant liner building on Block 6B, the mass and scale is similar and complimentary. The building completes the overall composition fronting the Town Center plaza, but in a style that is contemporary, with generous glass and simple forms and surfaces. From the materials board that was provided with the most recent submission, selected materials appear similar to those used in portions of surrounding buildings, thus further making the building "transitional" in many respects. The building is clearly different but adapted to the surrounding context.

The buildings' longest and most visible façade is along the Eisenhower Avenue frontage. The applicant has revised their plans by increasing the glazed area westward along Eisenhower Avenue to break the impression of a 50/50 solid/glass split between the aluminum-framed plat glass system on the east side of the façade, and the aluminum-panel system on the west side of the façade. This treatment continues on the east side along Swamp Fox Road, but the façade is punctuated by two setbacks near the corners.

The glass façade expression continues along the curved north façade. On this facade, glass predominates, with only slender aluminum-clad columns vertically separating store fronts. The aluminum panel system shifts to a gray color along the upper portions of the wall to define the roofline which now rises approximately five and a half feet to six feet in height east to west along

the 85-foot length of the façade. A canopy projects over the store front windows facing the plaza, and the west side is finished with an overhang over the sidewalk facing the private drive. This overhang is visually supported by V-shaped columns that echo architectural details found on the adjacent Hoffman Office Building #1.

When viewed in plan, the roofline takes the form of a crescent-shaped accent. This creates a contrasting curved volume atop the otherwise flat structure that is flush and integral to the north façade, but forms a setback parapet wall that arcs across and bisects the flat roof across the length of the building. Responding to DRB recommendations from July, the applicant has increased the height of the curved accent form from four feet to almost six feet for a more dramatic slope and stronger presence.

The increased height of the crescent shaped parapet form also provides screening for rooftop utilities. The applicant has provided cross-sectional drawings illustrating that these utilities will be adequately screened by the proposed parapet wall.

Site Design

Parking spaces line the perimeter of the semi-circle, with an ample sidewalk area between the parking and building façade. The sidewalk area accommodates outdoor dining and matches the scale of the existing liner building with restaurants located on Block 6B. The applicant has decreased the width of the pedestrian area along the parking and sidewalk area from 18.5 feet to 15.0 feet with this submission. The west side of the site is formed by the angle of the existing private drive that allows access between the semi-circular Town Center parking loop, a curb cut to Eisenhower Avenue, and a drive aisle and parking in front of the office building entrance on Block 6B. In addition to the parking along the semi-circle, additional allocated parking is provided on Block 14 in the parking garage adjacent to the cinemas.

Responding to the DRB's recommendation to consider the western façade and site details pertaining to pedestrian activity and visibility, the applicant has increased the width of the pedestrian area on the building's west side from 14.8 feet to 16.5 feet and has extended the concrete sidewalk along the private drive and across the loading area driveway. The applicant has also increased the pedestrian area on the building's east side from 17.0 feet to 18.8 feet. The site design changes have decreased the square footage of the building by approximately 40.0 square feet.

The loading area for the building is proposed in the southwest corner of the site, located east of the private drive. Per Section Nine of the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines, loading docks must not be visible from "A" street frontages, or in this case from Eisenhower Avenue. The applicant has proposed three possible screening methods, including 1) a row of low shrubbery, 2) a row of evergreen trees, and 3) a screening wall that is 5.0' lower than the main wall of the south building façade.

Existing site elements include tree pits and street trees along Eisenhower Avenue and Swamp Fox Road. The Town Center circle consists of planting beds, stone garden walls, park benches, bollard lights, brick and concrete hardscape treatments, and small trees. A bus shelter is found

approximately mid-block on Eisenhower Avenue. Pedestrian scale street lights are found along Swamp Fox Road and along the Town Center circle nearest the structure.

The applicant proposes to use the existing concrete and brick paver sidewalk design located west of the service drive for the proposed private sidewalks east of the service drive to create a cohesive assemblage with the streetscape and entrance to the office building of Block 6B. The applicant also proposes to install a city standard brick and concrete hybrid sidewalk in the public sidewalk area along Eisenhower Avenue to match the existing city standard brick and concrete hybrid sidewalk along the west side of Swamp Fox Road.

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS

Compliance with the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines

The table below provides a summary of how the proposal for this project complies with the intent of the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan and Design Guidelines. More detailed comments will be provided with the Analysis Narrative.

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
Land Use	Office & Retail	Retail	Yes
Retail Locations	Ground level on Eisenhower Ave & Swamp Fox Rd	Ground-level retail is proposed on Eisenhower Ave, Swamp Fox Rd, and the inner portion of the Town Center.	Yes
Allowable Gross Floor Area (AGFA)	7,900 sf	7,752 sf	Yes
Building Height	150' 10-15 stories	26.58' 1-story	Yes ¹
Architectural Articulation	- "A" Street Facades, Eisenhower Ave, Swamp Fox Rd: The building façade shall articulate a clear base, middle, and top to the building.	Facades conceptually articulate a clear base, middle, and top to the building.	Yes
Architecturally Significant Façade	- Eisenhower Ave: highest level of design excellence and materials. Innovative use of materials, articulation & increased	Staff finds the proposed design acceptable, recognizing the scale of the building and site, with expectations for a more significant future multi-block development.	Yes

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
	transparency at the façade base.		
Architectural Expression	HVAC and mechanical equipment shall be integrated in the overall building design.	HVAC and mechanical equipment will primarily be located beyond the arced roof parapet.	Yes
Street Frontage: A Street (Eisenhower Ave, Swamp Fox Rd)	<p>-A minimum of 90% of the building façade shall meet the build-to line.</p> <p>-The highest quality of architectural façade and streetscape treatment shall be used.</p> <p>-Main pedestrian building entries must be at sidewalk elevation and shall be spaced no less than 50' apart.</p> <p>-Active uses shall be minimum 50' depth.</p> <p>-No curb cuts for service or parking entries, service alleys or loading docks shall enter or exit or be visible along "A" street frontages.</p> <p>-Active uses shall be located on all street frontages.</p>	<p>In order to meet other criteria for the required pedestrian zone, the building would need to be pushed back and additional 5 feet from Eisenhower Avenue. Façade meets 90% of the build-to-line on Swamp Fox Road.</p> <p>Materials are provided for review.</p> <p>Pedestrian building entries at sidewalk elevation are not spaced further than 50' apart.</p> <p>Floorplans not shown. Uses are appropriate to the site and program.</p> <p>There are curb cuts on Eisenhower Ave and Swamp Fox Rd to accommodate the private street.</p> <p>Active uses, but not entries, are found on all street frontages.</p>	<p>No/Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>No</p> <p>Yes</p>

Guideline	Plan Requirement	Proposed Plan	Complies with intent?
Street Sections	Eisenhower Ave: 130'-134' right-of-way, four 10' travel lanes, two 10' parking lanes, variable width median, 22' pedestrian zone. Swamp Fox Rd: 66' building face to face, with two 11' travel lanes, on-street parking and 14' sidewalks.	Street section is variable width/lanes, no parking lanes, pedestrian zone is approx. 17'. Building face to face and sidewalk width complies, no parking lanes	No No
Public Realm – Hardscape Plazas	Plazas shall be an extension of the sidewalk, be a place for active uses, have ample seating areas, landscaping, setting for fountains monuments and statues.	No change to existing center plaza feature.	Yes
Public Realm – Streetscape elements	Provide streetscape elements per the Plan. Eisenhower Ave: Street trees 25' oc, 5' x 10' tree wells. Swamp Fox Rd: Street trees 25' oc, 5' x 8' tree wells with iron grates and 5' continuous tree trench beneath the sidewalk.	Eisenhower Ave: 6' x 4' tree wells, 30' oc spacing. Swamp Fox Rd: 5' x 7' tree wells, 15'-20' variable oc spacing.	No No

¹ The Eisenhower East Small Area Plan for Block 6C, as amended, permits a maximum of 7,900 square feet of gross floor area, between 10-15 stories, to a maximum of 150 feet in height.

V. ANALYSIS NARRATIVE

Staff believes that the proposed design and use of the proposed one-story retail building generally meets the intentions of the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP) and Design Guidelines. However, areas of improvement, as summarized below, are to be addressed through continued coordination with Staff.

With the most recent submission, the applicant appears to have changed the “composite wall panel color 02” from an amber orange color to a terra cotta color, both on the revised elevations and on

the submitted materials board. Staff prefers the amber orange color option shown on the original elevations and recommends that the elevations and materials be revised.

Staff also recommends that the proposed loading area screening be brought into compliance with Section Nine of the Eisenhower East Design Guidelines, as the proposed screening options do not adequately screen the loading area from view from Eisenhower Avenue. Staff recommends that the applicant enhance their screening wall option by matching the wall height of the main building façade and adding a perforated metal or metal architectural element to break the monotony of the aluminum composite wall panels across the south building façade; as shown in Figure 1. Staff also recommends landscape screening for the transformer located near the proposed loading area, which the DRB encouraged at the July meeting.

VI. CONCLUSION

Staff recommends final DRB approval of the overall design direction of the new 7,752 square foot retail building at 2425 Eisenhower Avenue, with advancement of the designs in consideration of the items described in the Analysis Narrative and continued coordination with Staff.

Staff recommends that the applicant continue to work with Staff to finalize refinement of the below listed items prior to hearing:

Building Materials/Color

- Change the “composite wall panel color 02” to the originally proposed amber orange color on both the elevations and materials board.

Loading Area

- Enhance the screening wall option by matching the wall height of the main building façade and adding a perforated metal or metal architectural element to break the monotony of the aluminum composite wall panels across the south building façade (Figure 1)
- Provide screening for the transformer near the loading area on the west side of the building.

Figure 1: Loading Area Screening Markup

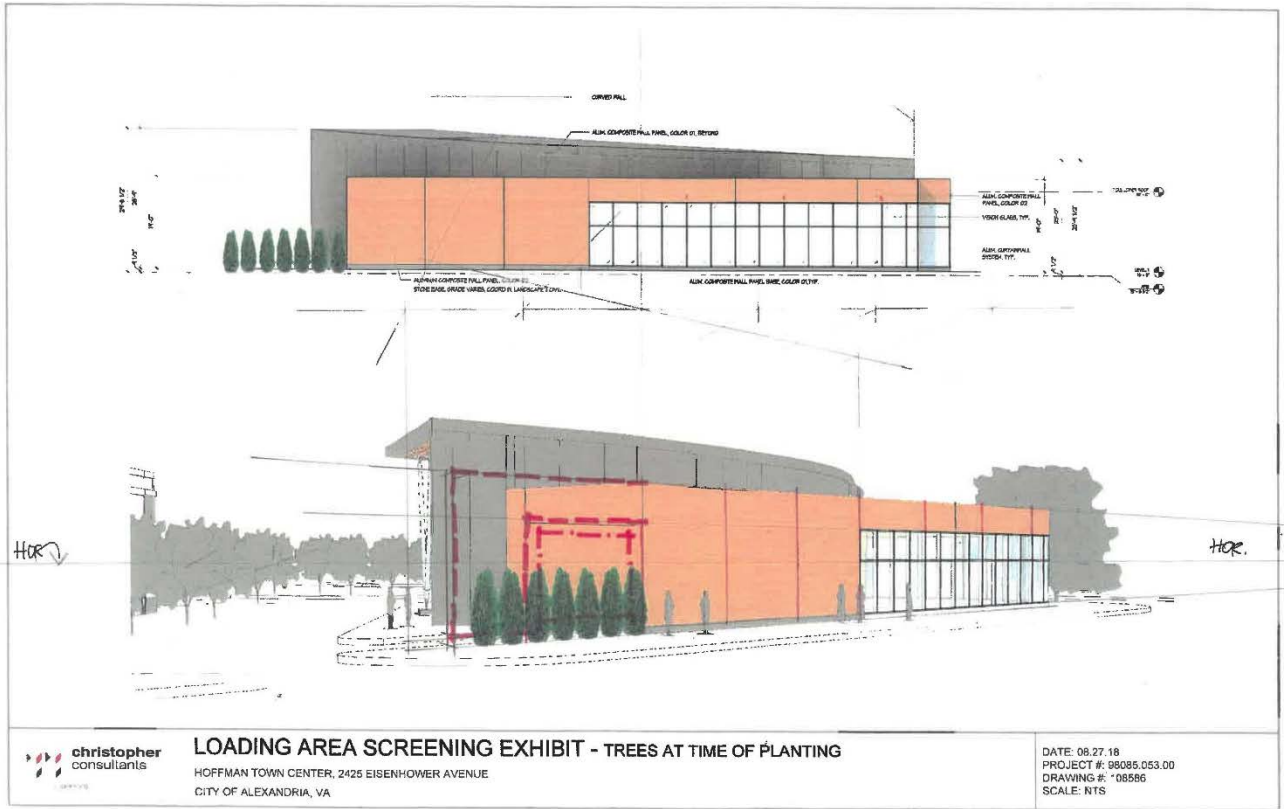
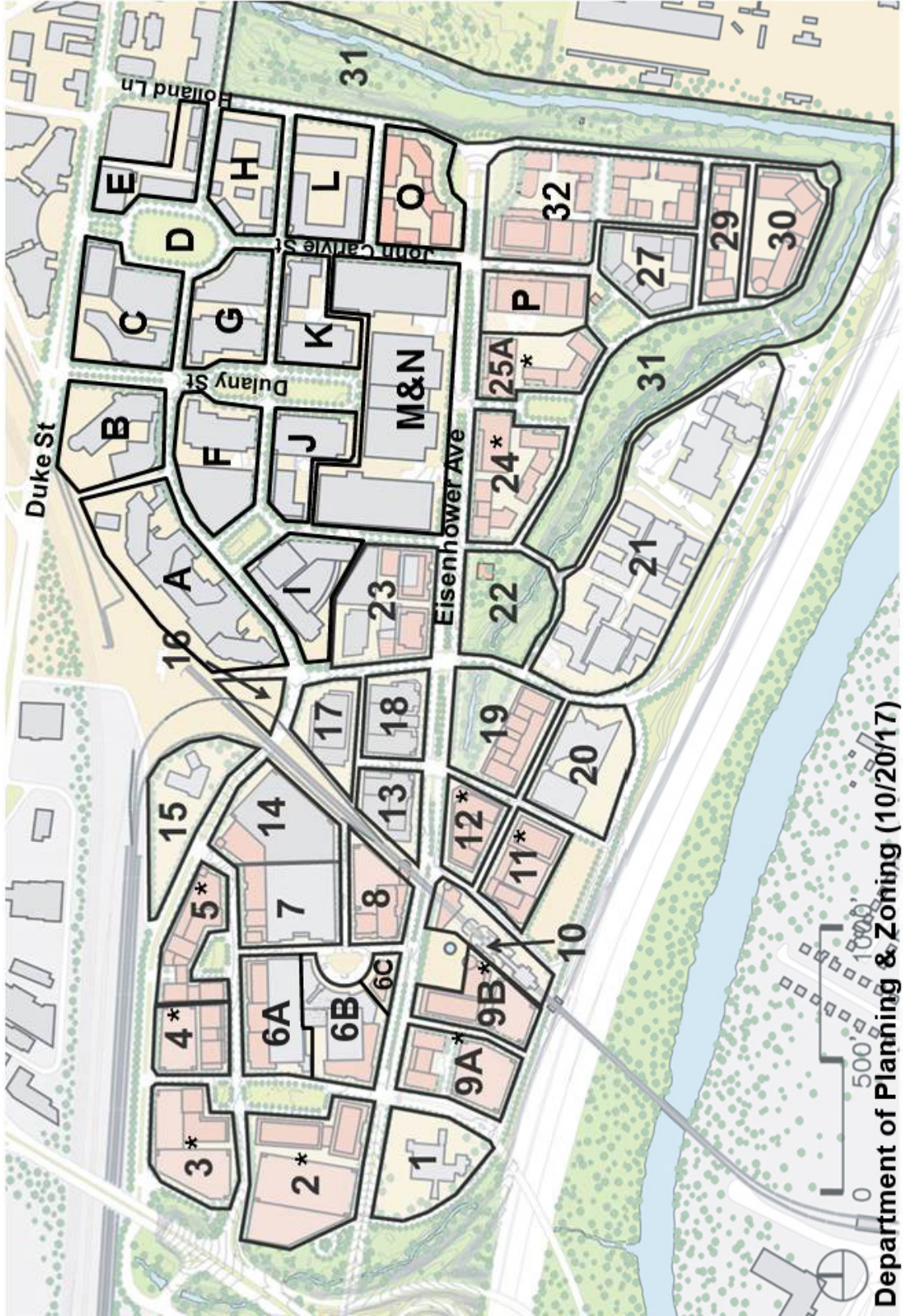


Figure 2: Loading Area Screening Rendering



Eisenhower East / Carlyle Blocks



Department of Planning & Zoning (10/20/17)