



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of September 26, 2009**

DATE: September 18, 2009

SUBJECT: SP #402 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT to modify conditions pertaining to vacation and encroachments, Columbia Pike Site Frontage, sidewalk and design improvements, sanitary sewer main improvements and water main improvements of the Penrose Square project, located at 2501 9th Rd. S. (RPC #25-016-012, -013, -014)

Applicant:

Carbon Thompson Development LLC

By:

M. Catherine Puskar, Agent/Attorney
Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley, Emrich & Walsh, P.C.
2200 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300
Arlington, Virginia 22201

C.M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the site plan amendment request with the exception of the request to modify Condition #14 (Vacations and Encroachments), subject to all previously approved conditions and revised Condition #19a (Columbia Pike Frontage), Condition #21 (Sidewalk Design and Improvements) – Columbia Pike) Condition #26 (Water Main Improvements) and Condition #27 (Sanitary Sewer Main Improvements).

ISSUES: The approved Penrose Square project (Site Plan #402) does not allow for a Columbia Pike street cross-section of adequate width to accommodate building the ultimate five lane street cross-section recommended in the Columbia Pike Street Space Task Force. It is not feasible because the south curb is not changing and the approved Condition #19.a. incorrectly assumed the north side curb could be built 28 feet from the Columbia Pike right-of-way centerline. In order to accommodate the desired five-lane street cross section, the developer requests modifying Condition #19 to reflect the necessary 56 feet curb face to curb face dimension.

SUMMARY: This is a request for approval of a site plan amendment to change the dimensions of the street cross section from 55 feet to approximately 56 feet measured from the existing south side face of curb to the north side face of curb. This would be accomplished by relocating the curb north along the Columbia Pike site frontage by approximately one (1) foot to the north.

County Manager: _____

Staff: Neil Thompson, Planning Division, DCPHD
Dolores Kinney, DES

PLA- 5340

County staff produced three (3) options to analyze the impact of the increased street cross sections on the other components of the right-of-way. While the preferred option (Option 2) is generally consistent with the goals envisioned by the Columbia Pike Street Space Taskforce, it differs from the actual streetscape design included in the Taskforce Report.

The applicant is requesting to amend site plan approval Conditions #19.a. (Columbia Pike Frontage), Condition #21 (Sidewalk Design and Improvements) – Columbia Pike) Condition #26 (Water Main Improvements) and Condition #27 (Sanitary Sewer Main Improvements) to allow for the modification of the streetscape and street cross section requirements.

BACKGROUND: The Columbia Pike Form Based Code, adopted by the County Board in February, 2003, established the locations for the placement of new buildings along the designated redevelopment areas of the Columbia Pike corridor by the use of Required Building Lines (RBL). For this site plan, the RBL on the north and south sides of Columbia Pike are placed 98-feet, 4-inches apart. It was intended that this be accomplished by setting both the north and south side RBL at a distance of 49-feet, 2-inches (half of the total prescribed RBL distance) from the center line of the roadway. The Columbia Pike RBL for the Penrose Square development was established by measuring the correct distance north of the Columbia Pike center line. However, at the time that the engineering design work at the site that established the Columbia Pike RBL for Penrose Square was conducted, accurate street center-line survey data wasn't available and the center line relied upon for design engineering purposes was approximately one foot south of the actual center of the current roadway. This has resulted in an overall street cross-section of an inadequate width (as measured from the proposed new north side curb face to the existing south side curb face) to accommodate the five-lane street cross-section (comprised of two travel lanes in each direction with a center turn lane) recommended in the Columbia Pike Street Space Planning Task Force Report. A similar issue has surfaced with the adjacent development, Siena Park, which is addressed in a separate report.

The project is now under construction and therefore the location of the Columbia Pike facade is fixed. Also the existing curb, gutter, and sidewalk along the south side of Columbia Pike across from this project cannot be reconstructed further south with a wide enough sidewalk as that area is not currently redeveloping and insufficient public right-of-way is available.

The following provides additional information about the site and location:

Site: The 167,897 square foot (3.85 acres) site is located accessed from 9th Road South, and is bounded by South Adams Street, future South Cleveland Street, and Columbia Pike. The site previously was developed as a strip shopping center, including a grocery store, assorted other retail, and associated parking.

Zoning: The site is zoned "'C-O-2.5" Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts.

Land Use: The site is designated on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) as "Medium" Office-Apartment –Hotel (2.5 F.A.R. Office Density, Up to 115 units per acre Apartment

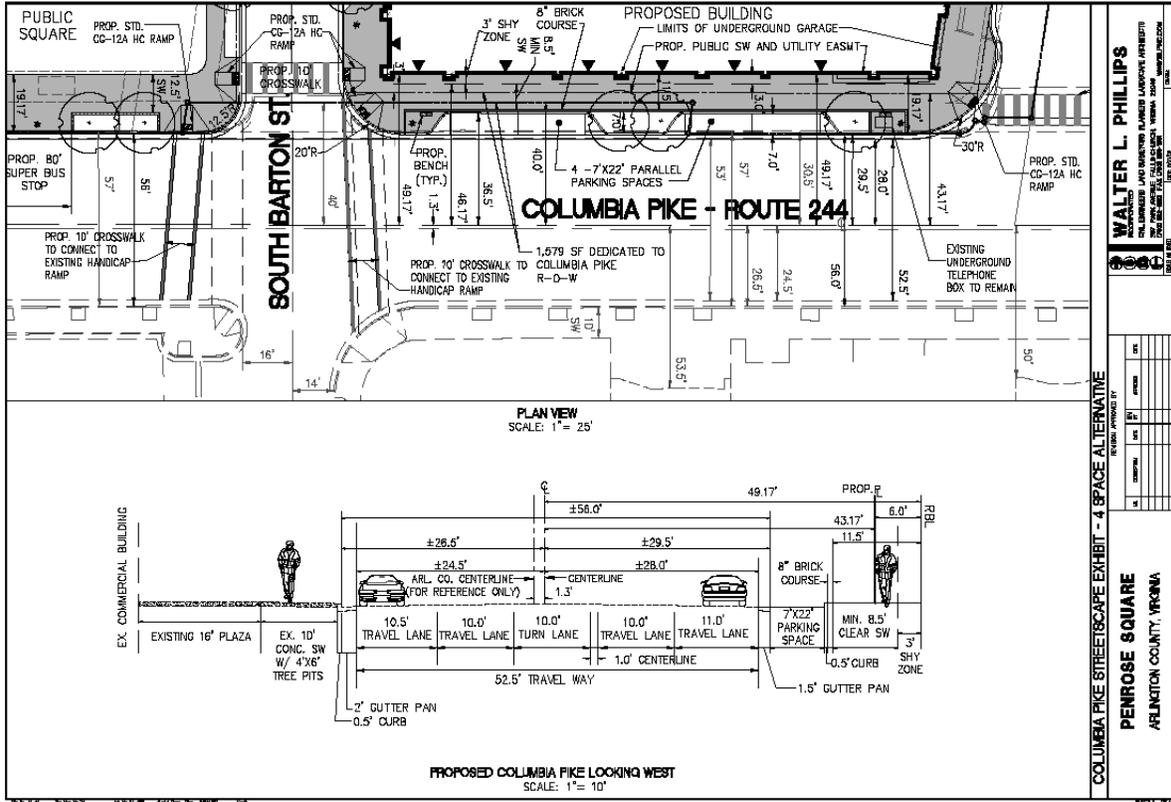
Density, up to 180 units per acre Hotel Density) with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District. This project is located within the Town Center node of the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Penrose Civic Association. The Columbia Heights Civic Association is across Columbia Pike from the site. Notice was sent to the Penrose Civic Association and a presentation regarding the amendment was given to Columbia Heights Civic Association.

DISCUSSION: In order to create a five-lane street cross-section of adequate width, a minimum of 56-feet, and retain the center turn lane, a reduction of approximately 1 foot in the width of the Penrose Square Columbia Pike streetscape frontage is required. Staff analyzed three (3) options for modifying the Columbia Pike streetscape frontage to accommodate the reduction in streetscape frontage width. These options are displayed and discussed on the following pages.

Option 1:

4 PARKING SPACE OPTION
(For Illustrative Purposes Only)

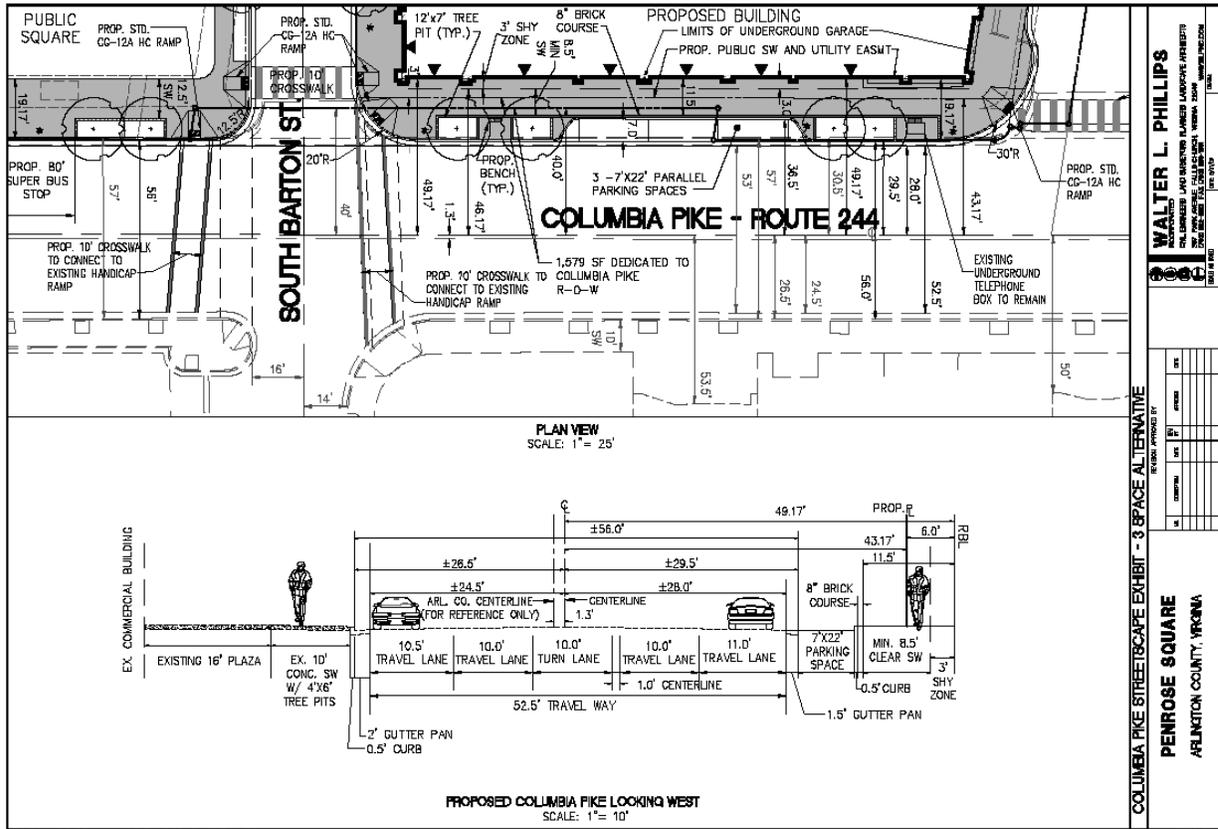


Option 1 shown here retains the two separate 7-foot wide parking bays with two parking spaces in each bay, as was originally approved. While this option provides the parked car buffer for pedestrians, convenient on-street parking and “friction” intended to induce motorists to maintain lower speeds that were envisioned in the Task Force Report, it results in a narrower streetscape. Here, an approximately 12-foot wide sidewalk would be provided measured from the RBL to the back of the tree pit, with a pinch point of 11-feet, 2-inches in the areas of the parking bays. In this option, streetscape furnishings (lights, benches, trash receptacles, etc.) would also need to be placed within this approximate 12-foot wide zone.

Option 2:

COMBINED PARKING BAY OPTION

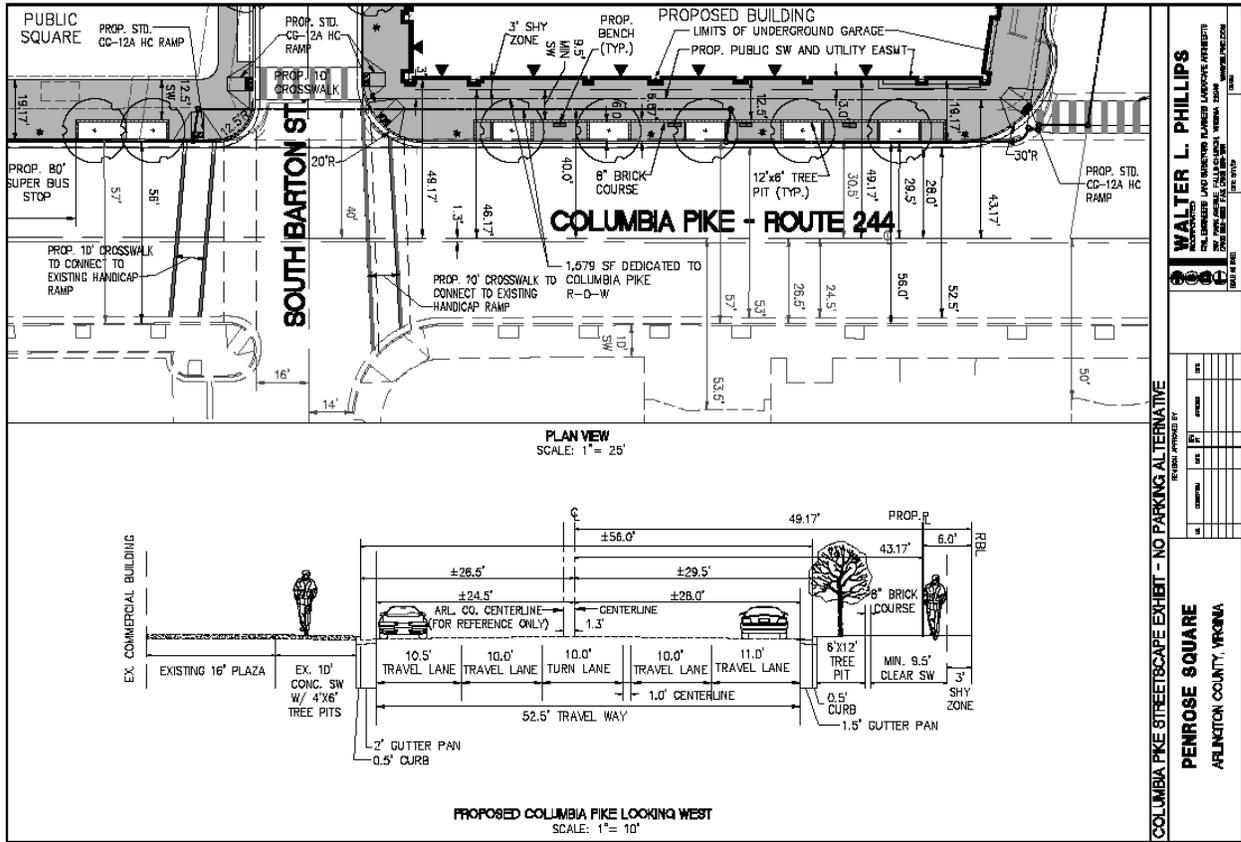
(For Illustrative Purposes Only)



Option 2 consolidates the parking in the center of the block frontage and provides three (3) parking spaces in a single bay, representing a loss of one space. This option also provides a sidewalk that is approximately 12-feet wide measured from the RBL to the back of the tree pit with a pinch point of 11-feet, 2-inches in the area of the parking bay. The consolidated parking allows for two 7-foot wide furniture zones, one at each end of the block. The consolidated mid-block parking provides for simplified parking movements and efficient merging into traffic. The on-street parking introduces “friction” that acts to calm vehicle traffic. This option also provides additional sidewalk area for streetscape furnishing, street trees and lighting.

Option 3:

NO PARKING OPTION (For Illustrative Purposes Only)



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REVISION APPROVED BY

NO.	DATE	BY	APPROVED BY

COLUMBIA PIKE STREETSCAPE EXHIBIT - NO PARKING ALTERNATIVE

PENROSE SQUARE
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Option 3 eliminates parking along the Columbia Pike frontage. While the advantages of the three or four on-street parking are lost, this option provides for a consistently wider streetscape frontage. The sidewalk is approximately 13-feet wide measured from the RBL to the back of the tree pits with pinch points of approximately 12-feet. This option allows for more street trees and additional space for street lights and streetscape furnishings such as benches, bike racks and trash receptacles.

The three options were forwarded to the members of the Form Based Code Advisory Working Group for comments. The same options were forwarded to the applicant. Comments were received from the advisory group which supported an on-street parking design. The options were presented to a special meeting of the Columbia Heights Civic Association (CHCA) on September 16, 2009. The CHCA voted to support the alternative without on street parking. The applicant provided a letter which supported the No Parking Option but is amenable to Option 2 with consolidated parking because it allows for greater visibility for retail, provides parking and increased sidewalk width and area.

Below is a chart outlining the effects of the three (3) options on the streetscape/sidewalk area, number of street trees and length of narrowed sidewalk due to parking spaces.

Options	Effect on Streetscape/Sidewalk Area *	Effect on Street Trees	Length of Narrowed Sidewalk to Accommodate Parking
1 - Distributed Parking	Approx. 210 sq. ft. loss	No change	Approx. 88 linear feet
2 - Consolidated Parking	Approx. 8 sq. ft. gain	Gain of 1 tree	Approx. 66 linear feet
3 - No Parking	Approx. 534 sq. ft. gain	Gain of 2 trees	No narrowed sidewalk area

** As compared to the approved street and sidewalk section.*

The loss of parking on Columbia Pike was a concern of some citizen advisors. However, at the October 14, 2006 County Board meeting, contingent upon the execution of a development agreement, 713 structured parking spaces were approved with up to 393 reserved parking spaces for use by rental apartment residents and 320 parking spaces available to residential visitors, the general public, and retail patrons on a non-reserved basis. Additional on-street parking along South Adams Street is also available. As such, the site would not be negatively impacted by the loss of on-street parking on Columbia Pike.

Based on evaluation and consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the three options, staff recommends Option 2 and that the site plan be amended to consolidate on-street parking between South Adams and the proposed South Barton Street along the Columbia Pike north-side frontage, with 56 feet from face of curb to face of curb, an approximate 12-foot sidewalk measured from RBL to back of curb, and minimum 6-foot by 12-foot tree pits. This option is the best alternative to preserve the benefits of on-street parking while increasing sidewalk width and area.

The utilities, sanitary sewer, and water main must also be relocated due to this change. The approved conditions tie the installation of these improvements to the issuance of the final building permit. Given the delay of construction due to the modifications to the streetscape and street cross section, and in keeping with DES current practice, installation of utilities prior to the first certificate of occupancy is requested. Staff concludes that the proposed amendments to adjust the timing are appropriate.

With regard to the developer's request to modify Condition #14 as it pertains to the timing for the recordation of the vacation and encroachments, Staff is continuing its review and this request will be addressed in a supplemental report.

CONCLUSION: Staff recommends Option 2 as the preferred streetscape and street cross section which consolidates the on-street parking into a single mid-block three (3) space bay between South Adams and the proposed South Barton Street along the project Columbia Pike frontage. While Option 2 is generally consistent with the goals envisioned by the Columbia Pike

Street Space Taskforce, it differs from the actual streetscape design included in the Taskforce Report. With the exception of the request to modify Condition #14 (to be addressed in a supplemental report), staff supports the applicant's amendment request subject to all previous conditions and the revised conditions, as follows:

Pavement, Curb and Gutter Along All Frontages

19. The developer agrees to show on the final engineering plans pavement, curb and gutter along all frontages of this site in accordance with the then-current Arlington County Standard for concrete curb and gutter and the then-current standards for pavement and according to the following dimensions. The pavement, curb and gutter shall be constructed prior to issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy for occupancy of the applicable phase of the project.
 - a. Columbia Pike site frontage: The face of curb shall be located approximately 56 feet from the existing south face of the existing curb at the intersection curb return shall be located 28 feet from the survey centerline and as shown on the final engineering plan approved by the County Manager.

21. **Columbia Pike** – A minimum of an approximately 20 19-foot wide streetscape sidewalk measured from the back face of curb, including on-street parking and/or a 7-foot wide landscape strip 6-foot x 12-foot tree pits with 8-inch tree bands planted with 4 to 4 ½ inch caliper Red Maple street trees and such ground cover as liriopie muscarii, hypericum, calycinum (Aarons Beard), or juniperius conferta (Shore Juniper), placed approximately 30 feet apart on center.

Water Main Improvements

26. The developer agrees to show, on the final engineering plans, water main improvements in accordance with the following. The water main improvements shall be constructed prior to the issuance of the ~~Final Building Permit~~ first Certificate of Occupancy for the respective phases of construction.

Sanitary Sewer Main Improvements

27. The developer agrees to show, on the final engineering plans, and to construct sanitary sewer main improvements in accordance with the following. The sanitary sewer main improvements shall be constructed prior to the issuance of the ~~Final Building Permit~~ first Certificate of Occupancy.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

August 1961	Designated as “Undetermined Uses” on the General Land Use Plan.
May 16, 1964	Denied a request to rezone the north portion of RPC #25-016-006, -009, -011 from “C-1” to “C-2” on Approved a rezoning of RPC #25-016-006, -009, -011 from “C-1” and “C-2” to “C-S-C”, and approved a site plan (SP #38) as part of the rezoning.
December 1964	Designated “General Business” on the General Land Use Plan.
April 1975	Designated as “Service Commercial” (Personal and business services. Generally one to three stories, maximum 1.0 FAR) on the General Land Use Plan.
June 25, 1977	Approved a rezoning of RPCs #25-016-006, -009, -011 from “C-S-C” to “C-1” because “C-S-C” had been deleted from the Zoning Ordinance.
September 15, 1981	Approved a rezoning of RPCs #25-016-006, -009, -011 from “C-1” to “C-2”.
November 15, 1986	General Land Use Plan amended to include the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.
1987	In 1987, the description of “Service Commercial” was shown as “Personal and business services. Generally one to four stories. Maximum 1.5 FAR” on the General Land Use Plan.
December 17, 2002	Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District boundaries amended on the General Land Use Plan.
February 25, 2003	Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code (Section 20 of the Zoning Ordinance) adopted.
February 10, 2004	Columbia Pike Street Space Plan adopted and Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code amended to include new Required Building lines. The description of “Service

Commercial” was also shown as “Personal and business services. Generally one to four stories. Maximum 1.5 FAR with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” on this GLUP.

July 10, 2006

County Board accepted the withdrawal of a use permit request for approval under the Columbia Pike Form Based Code (RPCs #25-016-006, -009, -011).

County Board authorized advertisement of a General Land Use Plan amendment from “Service Commercial” to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel; a rezoning from “C-2” to “C-O-2.5;” and a site plan.

September 16, 2006

County Board authorized advertisement of a General Land Use Plan amendment from “Service Commercial” to “Public” and of a rezoning from “C-2” to “S-3A” for the portion of the site to be included in the public square called for in the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code.

October 24, 2006

Approved the Site Plan to construct approx. 299 dwelling units, approx. 61,500 sq ft grocery store, approx. 36,000 sq ft retail, modification of use regulations for density

Amended the General Land Use Plan for the subject parcels to “Medium” Office-Apartment –Hotel (2.5 F.A.R. Office Density, Up to 115 units per acre Apartment Density, up to 180 units per acre Hotel Density)

Rezoned the subject parcels from “C-2” Service Commercial – Community Business Districts TO “C-O-2.5” Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts

July 11, 2009

Approved Site Plan Amendment pertaining to Plat of Excavated Area