



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of November 13, 2010**

DATE: October 21, 2010

SUBJECT: SP #28 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT for a freestanding building identification sign for Carlyle House Condominiums located at 5300 Columbia Pike (RPC#: 28-004-072 through 28-004-121)

Applicant:

Carlyle House Condominiums Unit Owners Association
5300 Columbia Pike
Arlington, Virginia 22204

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the site plan amendment for a freestanding building identification sign, subject to all previous conditions, with one (1) new condition.

ISSUES: This is a request for a freestanding building identification sign replacing an existing freestanding sign at a condominium building and no issues have been identified at this time.

SUMMARY: This is a request for a freestanding building identification sign for a one-building site plan. The applicant proposes a 48.2 square foot freestanding building identification sign at the vehicular entrance to the building on Columbia Pike. It is replacing a freestanding building identification sign, and is proposed to be placed in the same location as the previous one. The sign does not conform to the Zoning Ordinance, which requires all signs to be placed flat against the building, but it does conform to the *Sign Guidelines For Site Plan Buildings*, which permits a freestanding building identification sign of not more than 60 square feet at the main vehicular entrance of a site plan building. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the site plan amendment for a freestanding building identification sign, subject to all previous conditions and with one (1) new condition.

BACKGROUND: The subject property is a 10-story condominium building constructed in 1980.

County Manager: *BMD/GA*

County Attorney: *[Signature]* *[Signature]*

Staff: Peter Schulz, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-5715

1.

The following provides more information about the site:

Site: The site consists of condominium tower and associated parking structure, constructed in 1980.

To the north: The building adjoins a gas station, zoned “RA14-26” (legally nonconforming). Across Columbia Pike, apartment buildings zoned “RA8-18” and “RA14-26”.
To the south: Garden apartments zoned “RA14-26”.
To the east: Across South Frederick Street, a garden condominium complex zoned “RA7-16”.
To the west: The recently completed “5500” Form-Based Code project zoned “C-1”.

Zoning: The site is zoned “RA7-16” Apartment Dwelling Districts.

Land Use: The subject site is designated “Low-Medium Residential” (16-36 units/acre) on the General Land Use Plan.

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Columbia Forest Civic Association boundary. The Civic Association has been informed of the request, and to date has not commented on the sign proposal.

DISCUSSION: The applicant proposes a freestanding building identification sign stating “The Carlyle House” to be placed at the vehicular entrance to the building on Columbia Pike. Other than address signs, this is the only sign on the property. It will replace an existing freestanding sign at that location. The proposed sign will be double-faced, placed perpendicular to Columbia Pike. It will be 6.7 feet high and 7.2 feet wide, roughly the same size as the existing sign. The proposed sign will be placed on the condominium’s property behind the right-of-way line, where the existing sign is located.

The proposed sign does not conform to the Zoning Ordinance as the Ordinance does not permit apartment buildings to have freestanding building identification signs in residential zoning districts. In addition, the Zoning Ordinance requires any freestanding signs in residential zoning districts to be a minimum of 15 feet from the public right-of-way, which the proposed sign does not meet.

However, the proposed sign is permitted under the *Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings*, which states: “For a single building project, either an identification sign mounted on the building at the building’s major entrance or a single freestanding building identification sign... may be approved, but not both.” The applicant does not have a building identification sign on the building, only the legally-required building number. The *Sign Guidelines* further state that the maximum size of a freestanding building identification sign shall be no more than 60 square feet, and furthermore, must be located so as to “guide vehicular or pedestrian traffic going to the site”. In this case, the applicant is proposing a sign of 48.2 square feet to be placed at the vehicular entrance to the building and its parking on Columbia Pike.

While staff generally discourages freestanding signs, the subject property has an existing freestanding sign. The building is set back between 25 and 90 feet from the road, and the vehicle

entrance is located past the building, and could be mistaken for the vehicular entrance for another building, such as the gas station next door (see attachment #2). Approved in the early 1970s, the building does not have the street and sidewalk presence that is County policy for site plan buildings and for Columbia Pike. In addition, the building's architecture and deep setback from the street would prevent a building-mounted sign from being effectively seen by pedestrians and vehicles travelling in both directions of Columbia Pike.

The proposed sign is detailed in the chart below:

Sign Type (Quantity)	Dimensions	Sign Area	Materials and Color	Location
Proposed identification sign (1)	7.2 feet wide X 6.7 feet tall	48.2	"Faux-stone", either wood or plastic. Tan with brown lettering.	Freestanding monument; At the vehicular entrance on Columbia Pike in the same location as the existing sign.
Total sign area proposed		48.2 s.f.		

CONCLUSION: The proposed freestanding sign complies with *Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings* with respect to building identification signs. Therefore, staff recommends approval of a site plan amendment for the proposed freestanding monument sign, subject to all previous conditions and one (1) new condition:

Proposed new condition:

36. The applicant agrees that the freestanding monument sign for The Carlyle House shall be consistent, as to location, size, design, text, with the exhibits to the staff report that are entitled "Exhibit 1" and are dated October 21, 2010 and with the chart in the Board report and as approved by the County Board on November 13, 2010. The applicant further agrees that the total sign area such freestanding monument sign shall not exceed 49 square feet. Such sign may be lighted from ground based indirect lights. Such lights shall be shielded so as to face directly toward the sign and will not be directed toward traffic or neighboring properties.

Minor changes to the approved sign may be approved administratively by the Zoning Administrator. For the purposes of the preceding sentence, minor changes shall include only the following: (i) a minor adjustment in the location of the sign to meet field conditions (less than 1 foot in any direction); or (ii) either a minor change in the area of the sign (less than 5%).

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

June 6, 1962	Rezoned from “RA14-26” to “RA7-16” and approved a site plan (Z-1580-62-4).
May 16, 1964	Approved an amendment to the site plan. (1962 site plan and 1964 amendment expired).
March 14, 1973	Approved a new site plan (Z-1580-62-4) for a 10-story apartment building with 136 dwelling units.
October 12, 1974	Approved a site plan amendment for a temporary sales pavilion.

Carlyle House HOA
5300 Columbia Pike
Arlington, VA 22204
Charles Hawver
703-931-5520
September 17, 2010

Sign Proposed Use

There is currently an aged wooden sign residing in the island at the parking lot entrance to the Carlyle House. The sign is plain, made of plywood and mounted on 4" x 4" pressure treated posts, painted white.

We are proposing a new, faux stone in appearance, monument sign. This sign will be to identify our complex and will be a very attractive addition to our property as well as enhancing the appearance and appeal along Columbia Pike.

The sign will have our logo name as well as address numbers to help traffic along Columbia Pike to identify our location.

Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Charles Hawver
Chief Engineer, Carlyle House HOA

EXHIBIT 1 OCTOBER 21, 2010

COLUMBIA PIKE ROUTE 244

(VARIABLE WIDTH)

APPROX. LOC.
EX. VA ELEC. &
POWER CO. ESM'T.
D.B. 1953 PG. 737

N 70° 47' 30" E - 246.65'

I.P.S. N 70° 02' 47" E
S 19° 57' 13" E
5.99'

S 13° 50' 04" E - 94.66'

EX. DEDICATED ESM'T. FOR STRE.
D.B. 1854 PG. 600

MOBILE OIL
CORPORATION

EX. BLDG.

EX. 12" BLACK LOOUST

EX. TWIN 14" BLACK LOOUST

EX. 6" SWEET GUM

EX. OAK

EX. 8" CHERRY

EX. MAPLE

EX. 4" SWEET GUM

EX. 15" STM. SEWER ESM'T. +
D.B. 1854 PG. 627

EX. EMERGENCY VEHICLE ESM'T.
D.B. 1854 PG. 608

BUS STOP

FIRE ESCAPE

PLANTER

EX. 10" S D.B. 1854

TEMP.

RETAINING

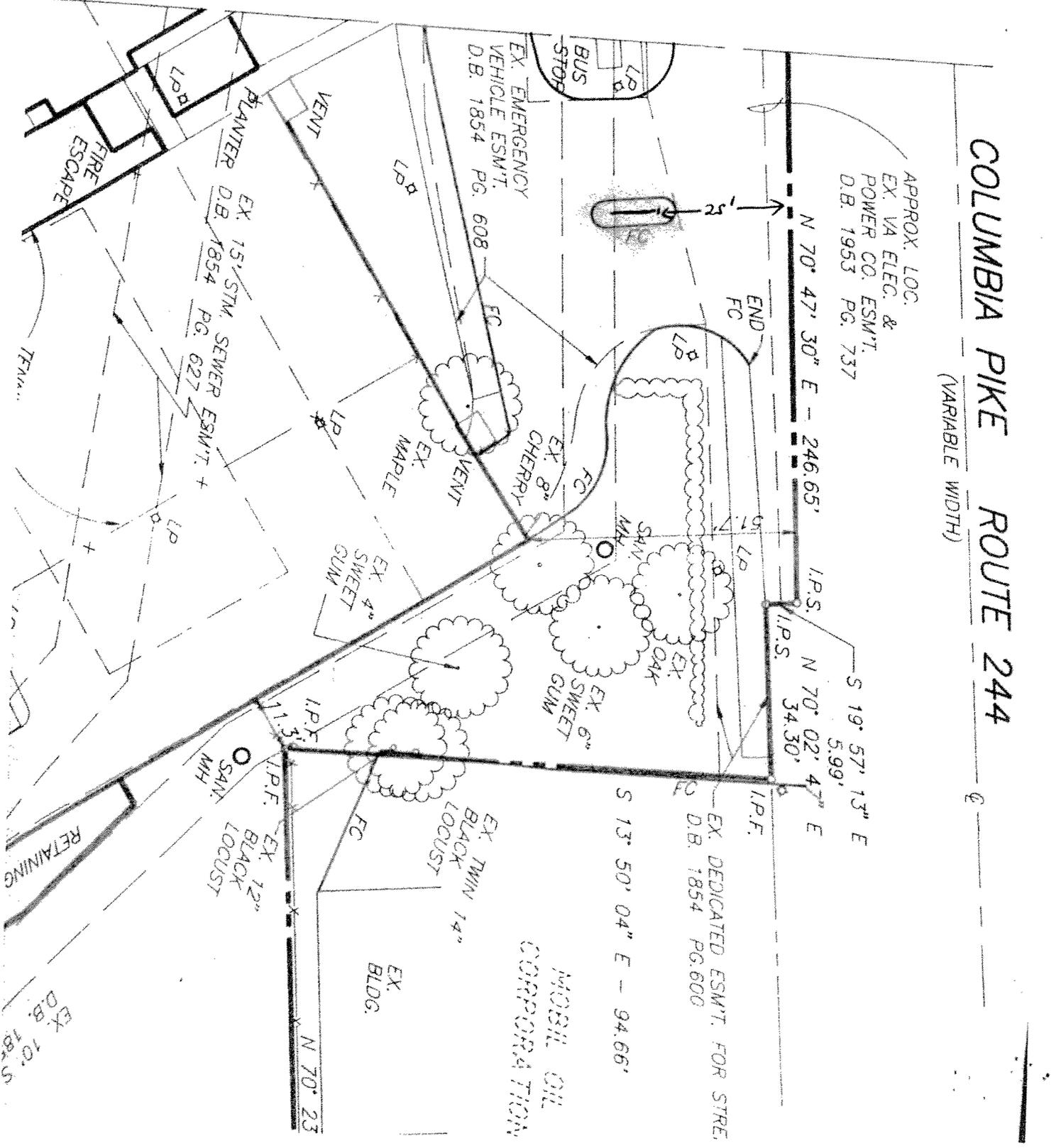
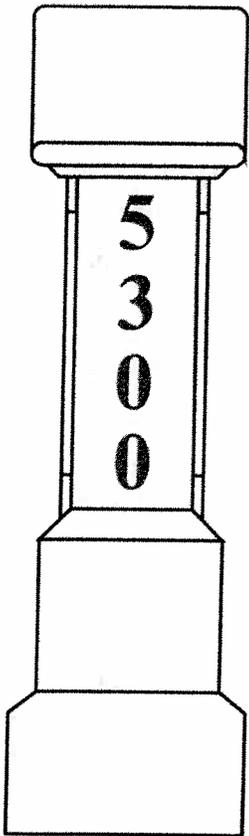


EXHIBIT 1 OCTOBER 21, 2010



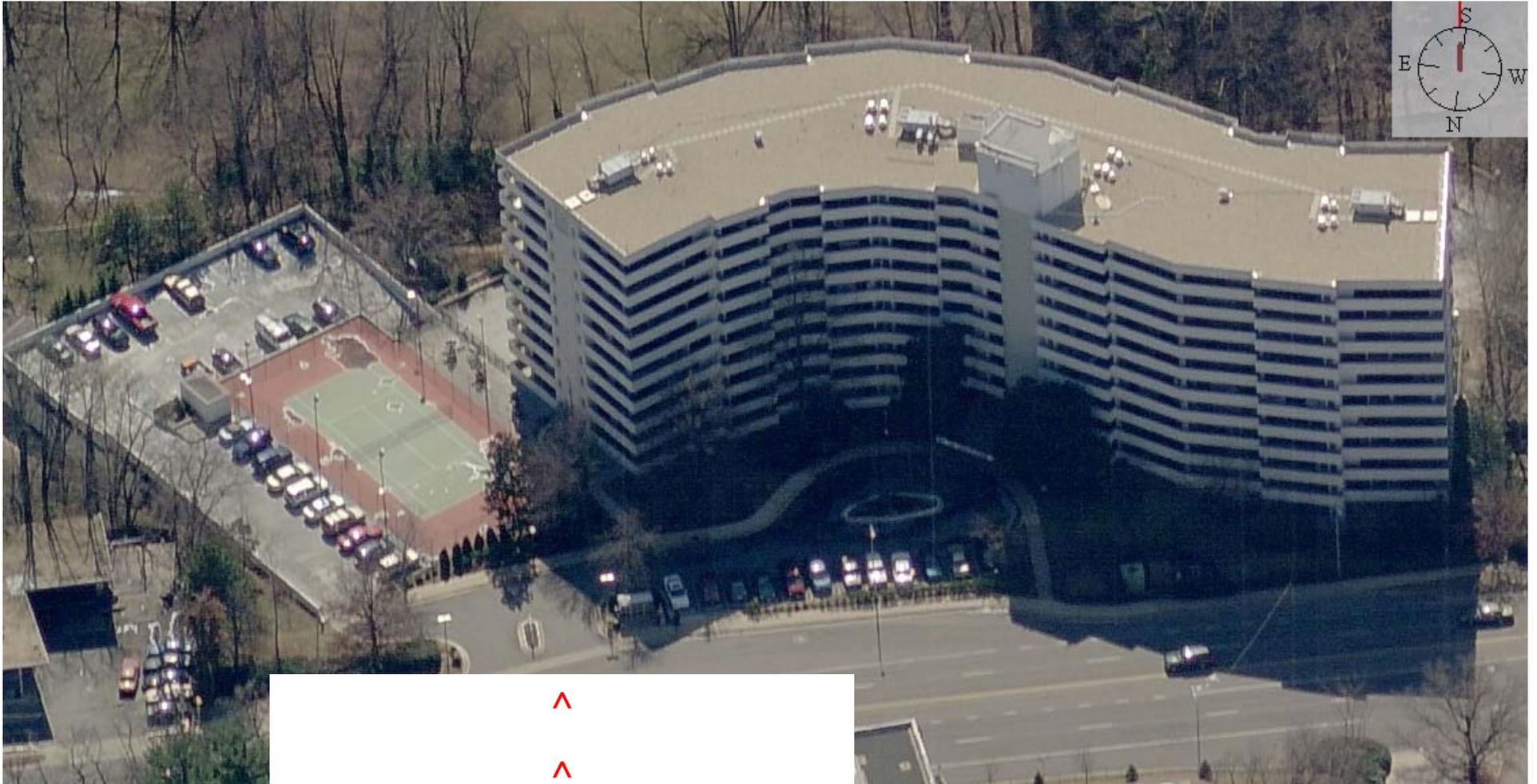
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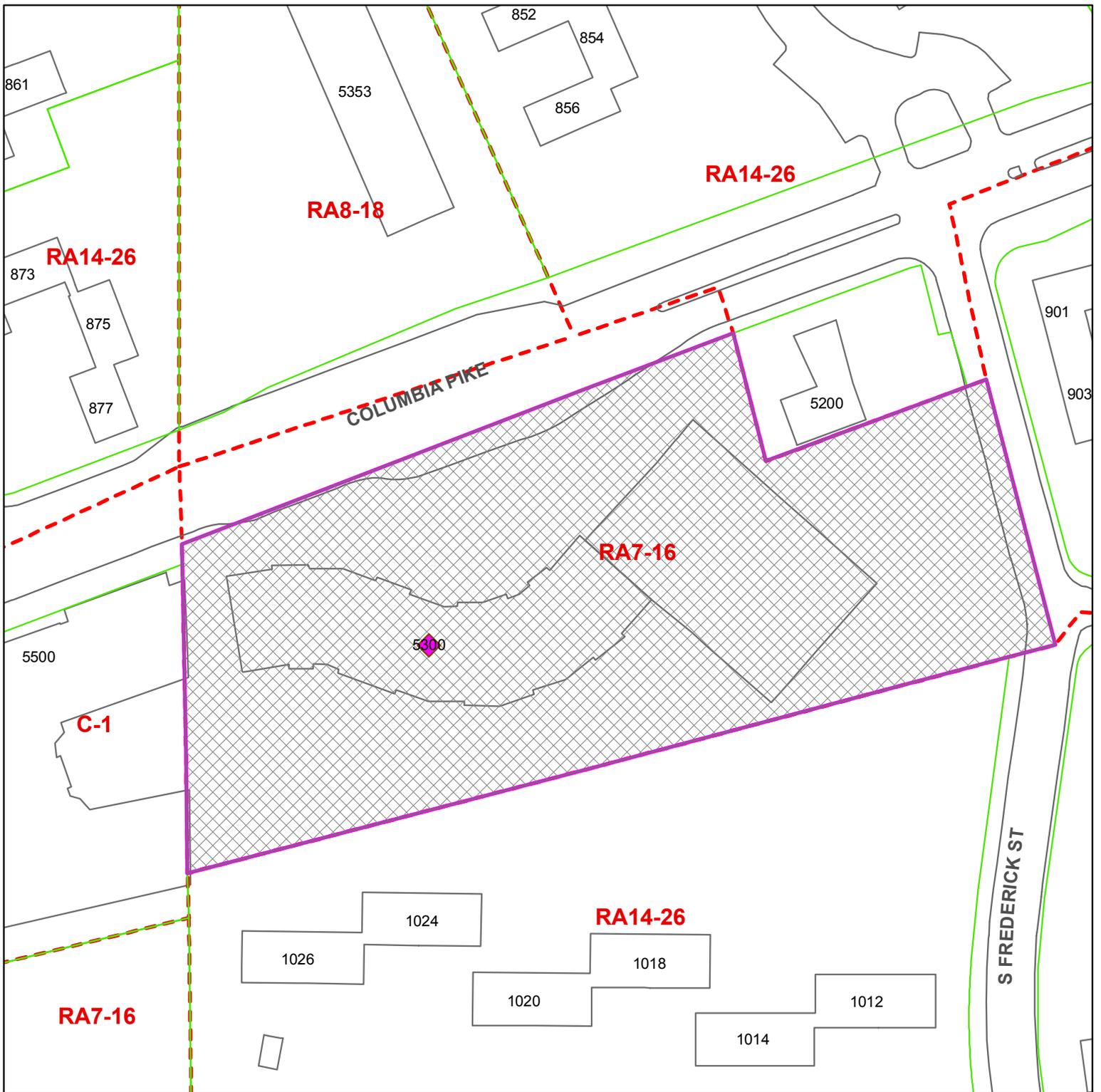
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Double Sided

The Carlyle—5300 Columbia Pike



Vehicular Entrance



SP# 28

5300 Columbia Pike

RPC: 28-004-072 through 28-004-121



 Case Location(s)

Scale: 1:1,200

Note: These maps are for property location assistance only.
They may not represent the latest survey and other information.