



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of March 12, 2011**

DATE: February 18, 2011

SUBJECT: SP #401 Virginia Tech Research Institute, LLC for an amendment to the comprehensive sign plan for a rooftop sign, located at 900 N. Glebe Road (RPC# 14-053-058).

APPLICANT:

Virginia Tech Research Institute, LLC
902 Prices Fork Road, #4001
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060

BY:

Nan E. Walsh, Esq., Agent/Attorney
2200 Clarendon Boulevard, 13th Floor
Arlington, Virginia 22201

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the attached Ordinance to approve an amendment to the comprehensive sign plan to allow a rooftop sign for Building B, subject to all previous conditions of SP #401 and revised Condition #50.

ISSUES: This is a site plan amendment request for a rooftop sign for the Virginia Tech Research Institute building located at 900 North Glebe Road. No issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: The applicant, Virginia Tech Research Institute, LLC, proposes to install a rooftop sign on the eastern elevation of an office building located at 900 North Glebe Road. This building is referred to as "Building B" of the Peck-Staples site plan project (SP #401). The proposed sign will display the name of the building's primary tenant ("Virginia Tech") including the university's emblem, and will not directly face any residential use. The applicant's proposed rooftop sign is consistent with the *Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings* and is within the total amount of sign area permitted for a rooftop sign for this particular building. Therefore, staff

County Manager: *BMD/GA*

County Attorney: *CEW* *AW*

Staff: Aaron Shriber, CPHD, Planning Division

PLA-5838

3.

recommends adoption of the attached Ordinance to approve the site plan amendment request for a rooftop sign, subject to all previous conditions and revised Condition #50.

BACKGROUND: The Peck/Staples site plan (SP #401) was initially approved on January 26, 2008 as a mixed-use development composed of office (415,816 s.f.), residential (108 units) and retail (36,241 s.f.) uses consisting of two (2) office buildings with ground floor retail, 28 townhouse style residential units and a high-rise residential building consisting of 90 affordable housing units. The subject application requests a site plan amendment for a rooftop sign for the office building referred to as “Building B” in the final site plan, which is under construction and will be occupied by the Virginia Tech Research Institute.

Following is additional information of the application area:

Site: The 4.2 acre Peck/Staples site (SP #401) is bounded by SP #133 to the north, Wilson Boulevard to the south, North Glebe Road to the east, and North Wakefield Street and North Woodrow Street to the west. The building subject to this application is located on a 1.02 acre parcel located in the northwest quadrant of the intersection between North Glebe Road and 9th Street North (to be built in accordance with SP #401). The uses surrounding the Peck/Staples site include:

To the north: Regent office building (portion of SP #331). The property is designated “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) and is zoned “C-O-2.5”

To the east: North Glebe Road and the Gateway office building, Continental condominium building and a Westin Hotel (portions of SP #331). The properties are designated “Coordinated” Mixed-Use Development District on the GLUP and zoned “C-O-A”.

To the south: Wilson Boulevard and a) Murphy’s Funeral Home, which is designated “Low-Medium” Residential on the GLUP and zoned “RA8-18”; and b) Rosenthal Mazda automobile dealership, which is designated “High-Medium Residential” Mixed-Use on the GLUP and zoned “C-2”.

To the west: North Wakefield Street, North Woodrow Street and single-family detached dwellings designated “Low-Medium” Residential on the GLUP and zoned “R-5”.

Zoning: The portion of the Peck/Staples site (SP #401) located east of North Wakefield Street is zoned “C-O-2.5”, while the portion located west of North Wakefield Street is zoned “RA8-18”.

Land Use: The General Land Use Plan (GLUP) designates the portion of the Peck/Staples site (SP #401) located east of North Wakefield Street as “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel while the portion of the site located west of North Wakefield Street is designated as “Low-Medium” Residential.

Neighborhood: The Peck/Staples site is located within the Bluemont Civic Association and west of the Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association. Both of these civic associations, as well as the Ballston Partnership, have been contacted about this site plan amendment request, though no comments about the application have been received by staff.

DISCUSSION: Following is information of the proposed rooftop sign for Building B:

BUILDING B ROOFTOP SIGN				
Sign Dimensions	Area (sq. ft.)	Text	Location	Materials
5'3" tall x 31'7.5" wide	166 sq. ft.	"Virginia Tech" (includes university emblem)	Eastern elevation of building facing North Glebe Road. Located 97'1" above finished grade of sidewalk.	Plastic faces overlaid with vinyl. Letters and emblem to be internally illuminated with LED lighting.
Rooftop sign area permitted based on Building B's linear frontage	300 sq. ft.			

The proposed rooftop sign will be affixed to the eastern façade of the building approximately four (4) feet from the northern edge of the building and approximately 97 feet above the finished grade of the sidewalk. Individual letters will be maroon with a white background and the university emblem will be maroon with white details. The *Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings* permit rooftop signage up to two signs per primary tenant and in an amount not exceeding one (1) square foot of sign area per linear foot of the building's street frontage. Accordingly, this building would be permitted up to two (2) signs for the primary tenant (Virginia Tech Research Institute) in an amount of sign area not greater than 300 square feet. As proposed, only one (1) rooftop sign consisting of 166 square feet of sign area will be provided for the subject building. Additionally, standard conditions regarding the restricted illumination period (12 a.m. – 6 a.m.) and the incorporation of a rheostat are proposed, which the applicant has agreed to.

CONCLUSION: The proposed rooftop sign is in compliance with the *Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings*, as it does not exceed the amount of sign area permitted for the building and is not oriented directly towards a residential use. Therefore, staff recommends adoption of the attached Ordinance to approve a site plan amendment to SP #401 for a rooftop sign, subject to all previous conditions and revised Condition #50.

Site Plan Amendment Ordinance

WHEREAS, an application for a Site Plan Amendment dated December 21, 2010 for Site Plan #401, was filed with the Office of the Zoning Administrator: and

WHEREAS, as indicated in Staff Report[s] provided to the County Board for its March 12, 2011 meeting, and through comments made at the public hearing before the County Board, the County Manager recommends that the County Board approve the Site Plan Amendment subject to numerous conditions as set forth in the Staff Report[s]; and

WHEREAS, the County Board held a duly-advertised public hearing on that Site Plan Amendment on March 12, 2011 and finds, based on thorough consideration of the public testimony and all materials presented to it and/or on file in the Office of the Zoning Administrator, that the improvements and/or development proposed by the Site Plan, as amended:

- Substantially complies with the character of the General Land Use Plan and the Ballston Sector Plan, and with the uses permitted and use regulations of the “C-O-2.5” District as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and modified as follows:
 - To permit a sign above 35-feet in the “C-O-2.5” District; and
- Functionally relates to other structures permitted in the district and will not be injurious or detrimental to the property or improvements in the neighborhood; and
- Is so designed and located that the public health, safety and welfare will be promoted and protected.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that, as requested by an application dated December 21, 2010 for Site Plan #401, and as such application has been modified, revised, or amended as described in Condition 50 below, the Site Plan known as Site Plan #401, is hereby amended to include a rooftop sign in the comprehensive sign plan, for the parcel of real property known as RPC# 14-053-058 and 900 North Glebe Road, and approval is granted and the parcel so described shall be used according to the approval as of January 22, 2011 as amended hereby, and subject to all previously approved conditions (numbers 1 through 89) with Condition #50 amended as follows:

Comprehensive Sign Plan

50. The developer agrees to develop and submit a comprehensive sign plan and that all exterior signs (including identification and directional signage) shall be consistent with the guidelines contained in “Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings” and with Section 34 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Administrator shall determine whether the signs meet the standards of the guidelines and the Ordinance. No sign permits will be issued until a comprehensive sign plan is approved. The developer agrees to obtain approval from the Zoning Administrator of the comprehensive sign plan before the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy. All proposed rooftop signs, defined as all signs that are 35 feet or more above the ground, shall require a site plan approval or amendment.

The developer further agrees, in its fulfillment of Condition #64 below (“Retail Elements”), that the only types of signs that shall be permitted for Building B shall be consistent with the types of signs permitted by Section 34 of the Zoning Ordinance or the comprehensive sign plan approved by the County Board on January 22, 2011.

The colors and materials of retail tenant signs shall harmonize with and complement the exterior materials and design of the individual retail storefronts so as to present a unified design approach for the individual retail unit. The design and construction of retail tenant signs shall express the elements of the character and individuality of the establishment, provided that any signage or architectural detail that differentiates each storefront shall not detract from the viability of other retail storefronts.

- a. The developer agrees that all signs for Building B shall be consistent with the comprehensive sign plan prepared by Bowman Consulting dated June 2010 and revised through December 23, 2010 and approved by the County Board on January 22, 2011. The developer further agrees that all signs for Building B shall be of the number, type, size, location, and structure shown on the comprehensive sign plan.

The developer agrees that the total sign area for Building B shall not exceed 300 square feet, with the maximum amount of retail tenant signage not to exceed 244 square feet. The developer further agrees to submit, to the Zoning Administrator with each sign permit application, a tabulation detailing the amount of permitted sign area consumed and remaining for Building B.

- b. The developer agrees that retail tenant signage for Building B is limited to three (3) signs per retail tenant, with the option of choosing among the types of retail tenant signs depicted in the comprehensive sign plan.
- c. The developer agrees that signage for the retail tenants in Building B shall be allocated as follows: sixty (60) square feet per retail tenant or an amount not to exceed the retail tenant’s frontage on North Glebe Road and/or 9th Street North, whichever amount is greater. The developer further agrees that the amount of retail tenant signage for Building B shall not exceed 244 square feet in aggregate.
- d. The developer agrees that standard retail tenant signs shall be affixed to the building, or building elements (trellis or metal channel feature), with a vertical clearance of no less than fifteen-and-one-half (15.5) feet or greater than twenty-and-one-half (20.5) feet above the finished grade of the sidewalk.
- e. The developer agrees that building mounted projecting signs shall be affixed to the building with a vertical clearance of no less than ten (10) feet from the finished grade of the sidewalk and extending no further than forty-two (42) inches from the face of the building. The developer further agrees that trellis mounted projecting signs shall be affixed to the trellis with a vertical clearance of no less than fifteen (15) feet from the finished grade of the sidewalk and extending no further than face of the trellis.

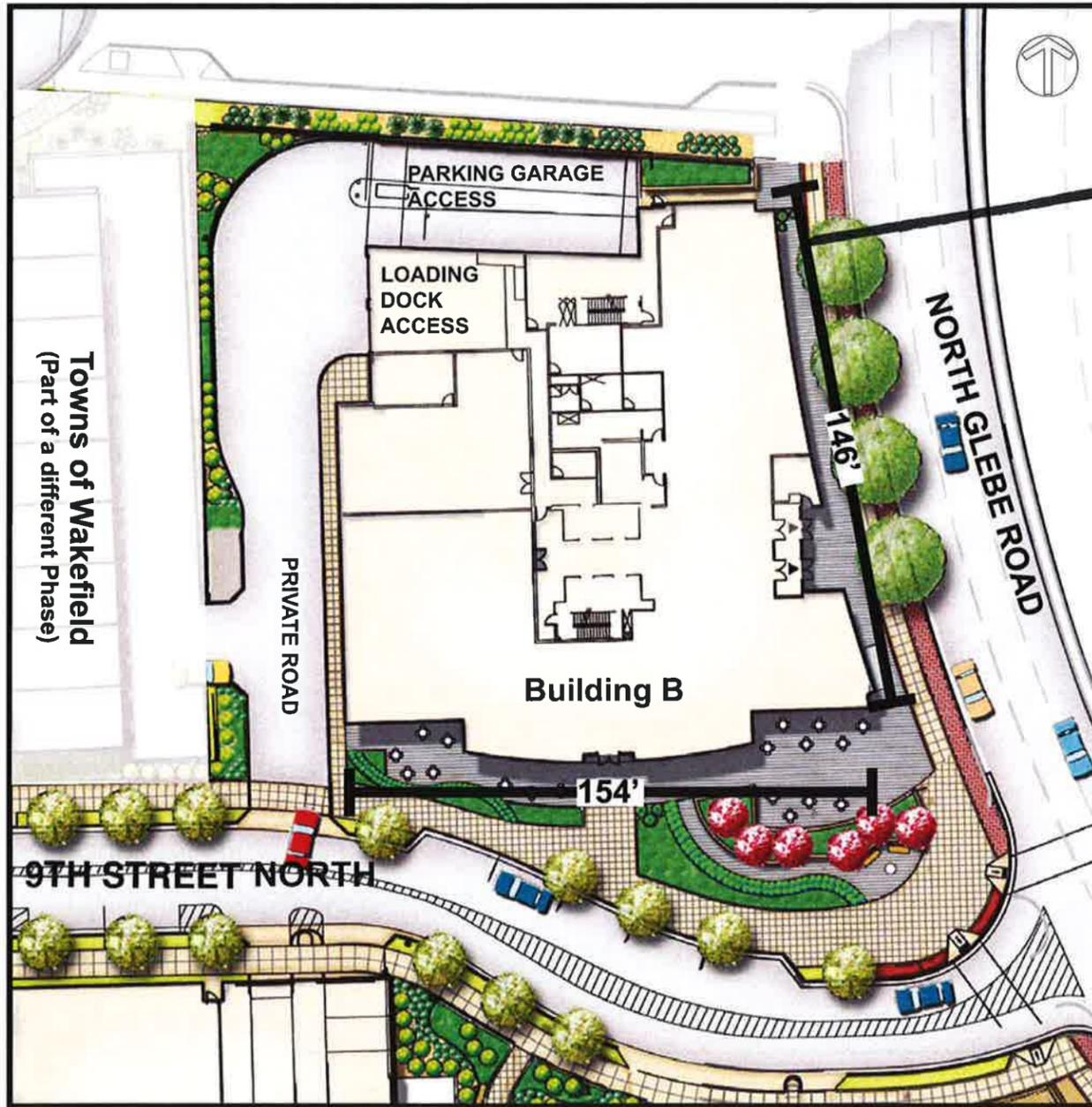
- f. The developer agrees that, in the event that the entirety of the retail space in Building B is leased to a single retail tenant, such tenant shall be permitted to install no more than three (3) individual signs, according to the types described above, and in an area not to exceed 244 square feet in aggregate. The developer further agrees that in this situation that no single standard retail sign, as described above, shall exceed eighty (80) square feet.
- g. The developer agrees that the proposed rooftop sign for Building B shall be limited to the location and same sign area as shown on the drawings prepared by Bowman Consulting dated June 2010 and Cooper Carry dated December 21, 2010 and approved by the County Board on March 12, 2011. The area of the rooftop sign for Building B shall not exceed 166 square feet.
 - i. The developer agrees that the Virginia Tech Research Institute rooftop sign on Building B shall not be illuminated between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., seven (7) days a week.
 - ii. The developer agrees to install a rheostat or other appropriate variable resistor that will allow the applicant to adjust (decrease) the rooftop sign's lighting intensity. The applicant further agrees that if the County Manager finds that the intensity of the rooftop sign's lighting has an adverse effect on the surrounding area, the applicant will, within 24 hours notice from the County Manger, reduce the intensity of the lights to a level that, in the County Manager's reasonable judgment, will no longer have such an adverse effect.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

- January 26, 2008 Deferred the GLUP amendment, rezoning, site plan, and vacation and encroachment requests to the February 23, 2008 County Board meeting.
- February 23, 2008 Approved a) an amendment to the GLUP to change the designation of the property from “Service Commercial” to “Medium” Office-Apartment-Hotel and to add Note 23 to the GLUP; b) a rezoning of the property from the C-2, RA8-18 and R-5 Districts to the C-O-2.5 and RA8-18 Districts; c) a site plan (SP #401) for approximately 415,816 s.f. of office, 36,241 s.f. of retail, 28 townhouses, 90 high-rise dwelling units, and modifications of use for density and below grade exclusions from GFA calculations; d) an encroachment for an underground electric vault within an easement for public street and utility purposes; and e) a vacation of a 5 foot sanitary sewer and water easement.
- July 19, 2008 Approved a site plan amendment to modify conditions #22 (structure free zone) and #43 (size of fitness center and applicable exclusion from density calculation) and to add a new condition #90 (temporary construction fence signs).
- July 19, 2008 Approved, by the County Board’s Own Motion, a site plan amendment for the “AHC Building” portion of SP #401.
- April 28, 2009 Approved a site plan amendment to modify conditions #6 (temporary circulation through construction), #19 (pavement, curb and gutter along all frontages), #21 (sidewalk design and improvements), #36 (plat of excavated area) and #45 (wall check survey).
- January 22, 2011 Approved a site plan amendment for a comprehensive sign plan for the Virginia Tech Research Institute building (900 North Glebe Road).

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Linear building frontage (measured along the public street frontages) = 300 LF



PROPOSED ROOFTOP SIGN



Bowman
CONSULTING

2121 Eisenhower Avenue
Suite 302
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.548.2188
Fax: 703.683.5781
ATTN: Jessica Bradshaw

CLIENT:
The JBG Companies

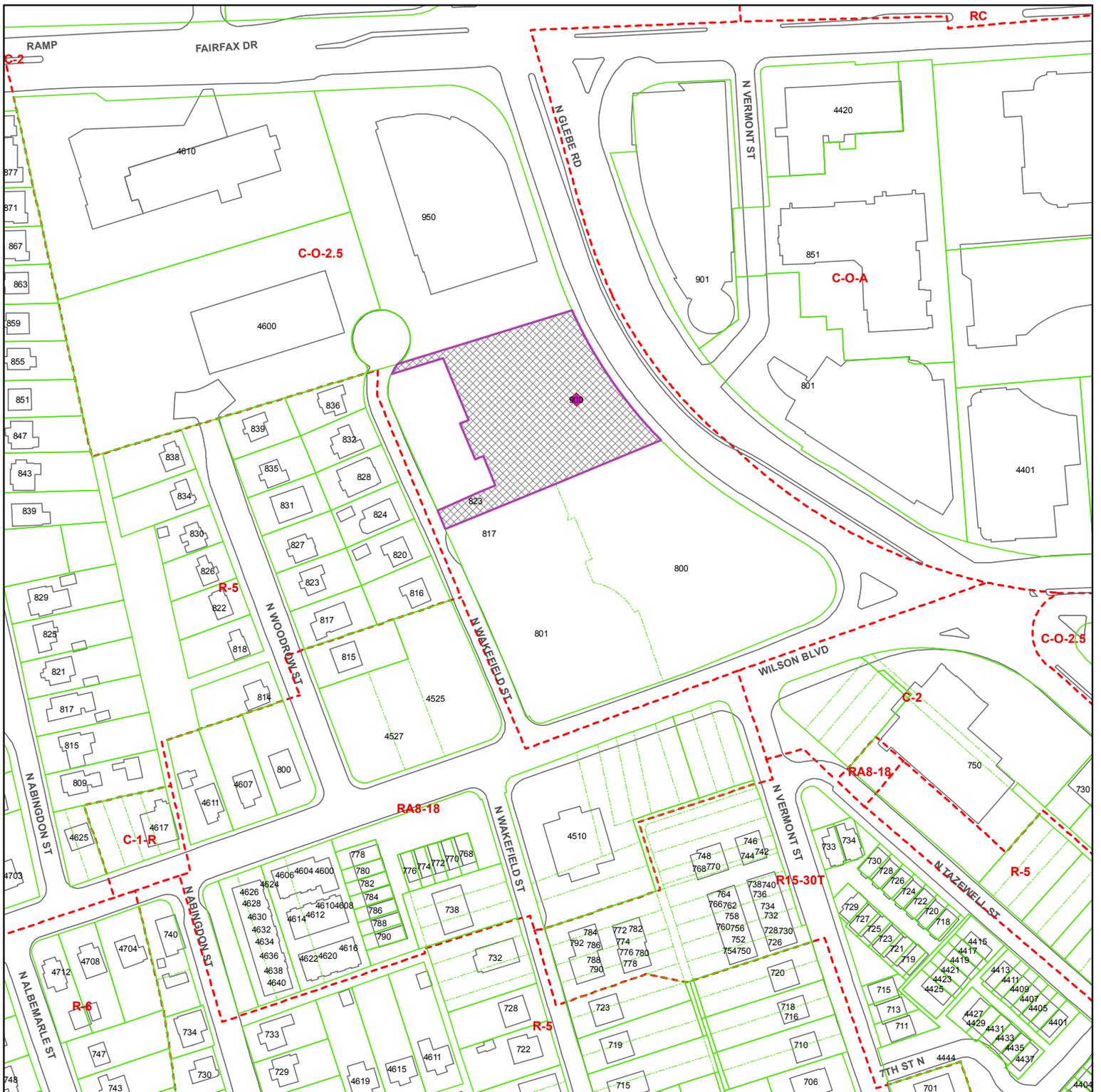
900 NORTH GLEBE ROAD
Comprehensive Signage Plan
ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

REVISIONS

Date	Description
06/01/10	1st Submission

DATE: JUNE 2010

SHEET 4 of 22



SP #401

900 N. Glebe Road

RPC: 14-053-058



 Case Location(s)
 Scale: 1:2,138

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