



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

### County Board Agenda Item Meeting of October 20, 2012

**DATE:** October 11, 2012

**SUBJECT:** SP# 8 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT for a Comprehensive Sign Plan at the Park Spring Condominium; located at 5000, 5009, 5010, 5017, 5020, 5025, 5030, 5033, 5040, 5041, 5049, 5050, 5051, 5060, 5065, 5070, 5075, 5083, and 5091 7th Road South (RPC# 220-01-PCD).

**Applicant:**

Stephen Cook, President  
Park Springs Condominium Association Board of Directors  
46120 Geneva Terrace  
Sterling, Virginia 20165

**C.M. RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt the attached ordinance approving a site plan amendment for a comprehensive sign plan for the Park Spring Condominium.

**ISSUES:** This is a site plan amendment for a comprehensive sign plan for the Park Spring Condominiums, and no issues have been identified.

**SUMMARY:** This is a comprehensive sign plan to reallocate the permitted sign area for a condominium project to permit an increase in the size for two (2) 20.5 square foot freestanding signs to be located at each of the two (2) vehicular entrances to the garden-style condominium development. Per Zoning Ordinance [Section 34.3.A](#) recently approved by the County Board, a Special Exception may be sought to reallocate sign area among sign types as long as the total aggregate sign area for a project, as specified in Section 34.14.B.4, is not exceeded. The total aggregate sign area is defined in Section 34.14 as one square foot of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage. The proposed modification does not exceed the total aggregate sign area allotted to the development, it is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood and will not adversely affect the neighborhood in which the sign is located. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to approve the site plan amendment for a comprehensive sign plan.

County Manager:

*BMD/GA*

County Attorney:

*[Signature]*      *[Signature]*

Staff: Sophia S. Fisher, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-6281

1.

**BACKGROUND:** The applicant is requesting a comprehensive sign plan for the Park Springs Condominium. Site Plan #8 was originally approved in 1966 for a total of 135 units. A comprehensive sign plan was not approved with the original site plan. The applicant met with staff prior to the adoption of the revised sign ordinance and determined that the requested increase in sign area would be possible as a special exception. Under the new sign ordinance, the County Board has the authority to reallocate aggregate sign area in commercial and multifamily districts as part of a comprehensive sign plan. The County Board cannot increase the total aggregate sign area allowed per development. The applicant here is increasing the size of freestanding signs.

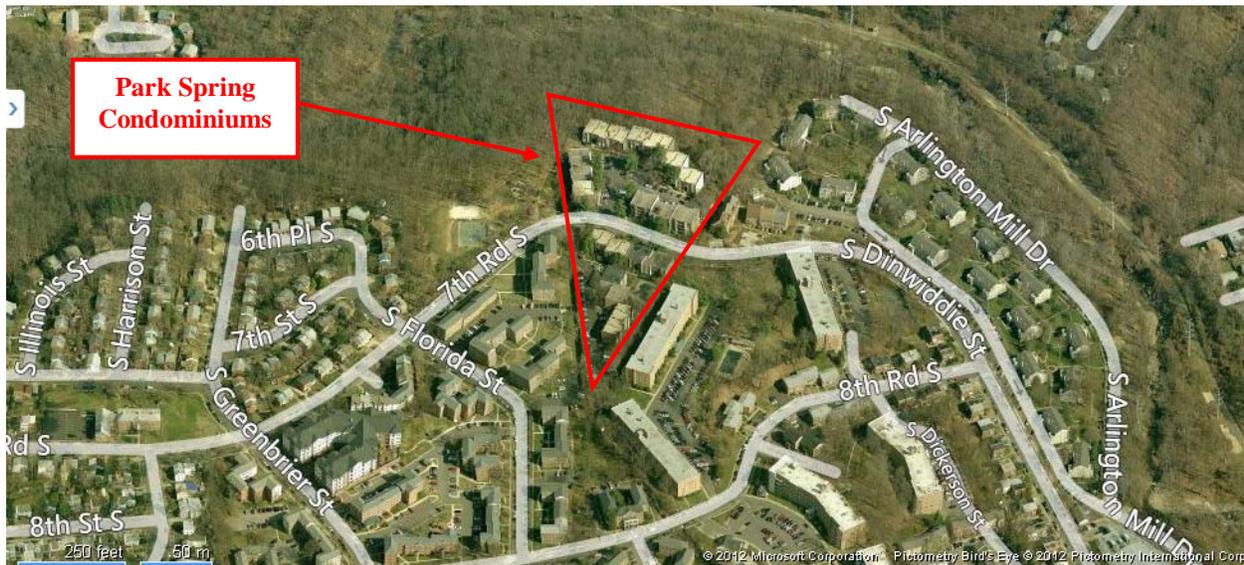
**The following provides additional information about the site and location:**

Site: The site is approximately 218,236 square feet (5 acres) and is located partially on the north and partially on the south sides of 7<sup>th</sup> Road South. The site is surrounded by multifamily residential uses on the east, west, and south, with Glencarlyn Park to the north and Tyrol Hill Park to the west.

Zoning: The site is zoned ["RA8-18" Apartment Dwelling Districts](#).

Land Use: The site is designated on the [General Land Use Plan](#) as "Low-Medium Residential" (16-36 units/acre)

Neighborhood: The site is located in the Columbia Heights West Civic Association. As of the writing of this report, staff has contacted but not received formal comments from the civic association.



Source: Bing Maps

**DISCUSSION:** Zoning Ordinance Section 34.3 states that the County Board may “approve modifications to standards in §34 where it finds that the modification of regulations is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood and will not adversely impact the neighborhood in which the sign is located...” Section 34.6 governs signs in multi-family districts (“RA14-26”, “RA8-18”, “RA7-16”, “RA6-15”), and permits one (1) 12-square-foot freestanding sign per vehicular driveway or vehicular entrance (Section 34.6.E).

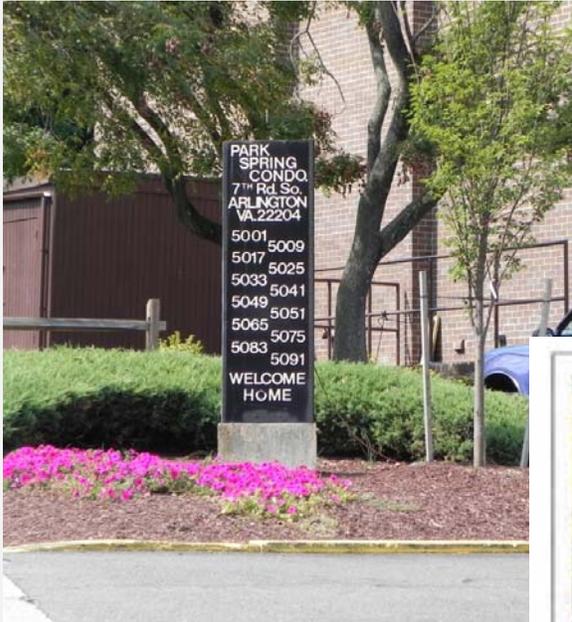
The applicant is proposing to replace two (2) existing freestanding signs which were constructed prior to the adoption of the current sign ordinance with two (2) 20.5 square foot freestanding signs in the same locations. The sign for the southern entrance to the project is 1.5 feet taller than the sign proposed for the northern entrance due to its placement behind an existing fence. There are two (2) vehicular entrances to the community, one on the south side of 7<sup>th</sup> Road South and one on the north side of 7<sup>th</sup> Road South. The existing signs are approximately 15.6 square feet each.

The site has a total of approximately 435 feet of linear building frontage (215 on the north side of 7<sup>th</sup> Road and 220 on the south side of 7<sup>th</sup> Road), which would permit up to 435 square feet of aggregate sign area under the comprehensive sign plan option. Other signs that are available under Section 34.6 include awning and canopy signs and additional freestanding signs. Should this application be approved, and the applicant decide at a later date that they would like to increase the number of signs on their property, they would be required to request an amendment to their comprehensive sign plan. Any future signs proposed under Section 34 would have to be deducted from the total allowed aggregate sign area and approved through the comprehensive sign plan process. The applicant is allowed to have incidental signs, which are defined by Section 34.18.B.19 as “A sign that provides information or directions that are necessary for the physical use of the site, including but not limited to signs that provide warnings, parking rules or way-finding information.” Incidental signs do not require sign permits and the ordinance does not require that they be included in a comprehensive sign plan.

Sign type (Quantity)	Sign Dimensions (Feet)	Sign Area (sq. ft.)	Sign Height (Feet)	Sign Text	Approximate Future Location	Materials	Lighted?
Freestanding Entrance Sign (1)	2'10" X 5'6"	20.5	5'0"	As shown on the attached drawing	Adjacent to the vehicular entrance to the northern component of the project	Aluminum and Vinyl	Yes
Freestanding Entrance Sign (1)	2'10" X 5'6"	20.5	6'6"	As shown on the attached drawing	Adjacent to the vehicular entrance to the southern component of the project	Aluminum and Vinyl	Yes

Total Sign Area Proposed: 41 sq. ft.

Total Aggregate Sign Area: 435 sq. ft.



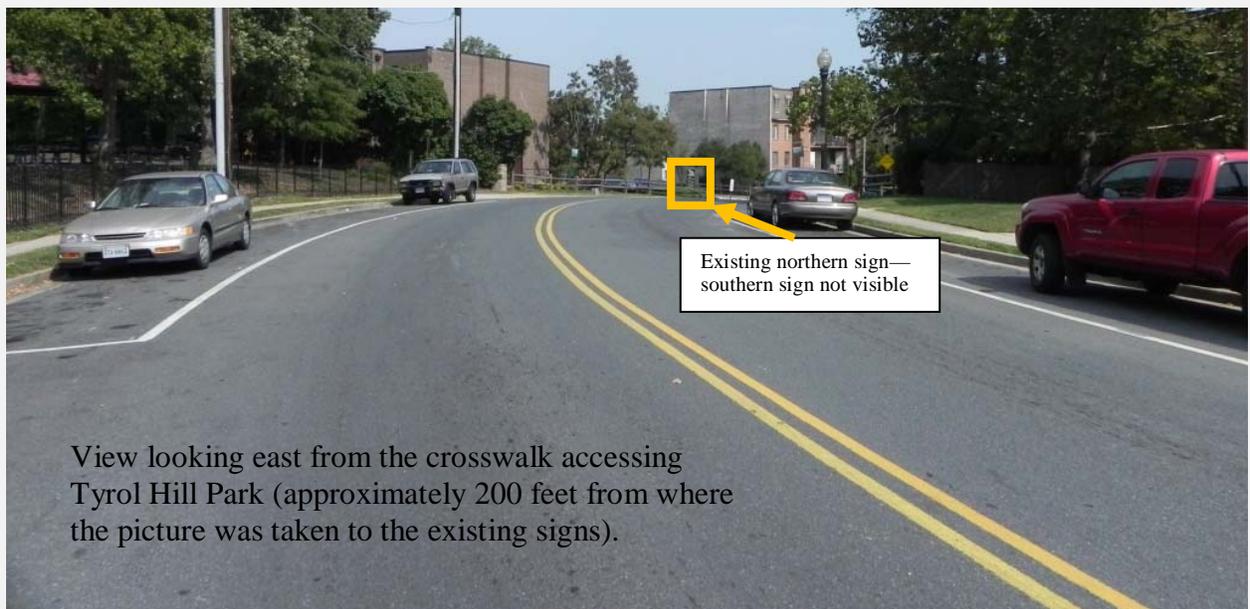
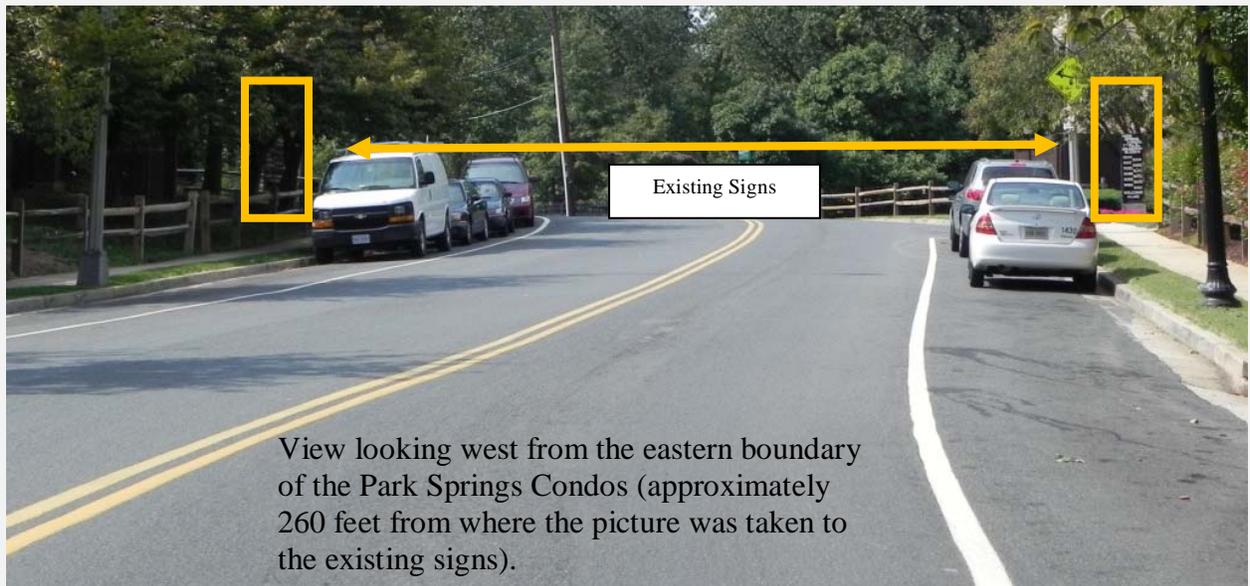
Left: Existing sign at the northern entrance to the Park Spring Condos (15.6 square feet).

Below: Proposed sign for the same location (20.5 square feet).

Note: not to scale.



The applicant is requesting the increased sign area for the freestanding signs because the current signs are difficult to see, especially given the topography of the site. The Park Springs Condominium project has two vehicular entrances which are located on a hill and on the interior of a sharp “S” curve. As is indicated in the pictures below, the existing signs are very difficult to see because of their size and coloring. The new signs proposed are white lettering on a dark blue background, and will be easier to read.



The total sign area proposed is 41 sq. ft.; however staff is recommending that an additional square foot of sign area be allocated to the two proposed entry signs (for a total of 42 sq. ft.) to ensure that the applicant has sufficient sign area to account for any variations in size when the signs are manufactured.

**CONCLUSION:** The proposed modification to reallocate the aggregate sign area and to increase the size of the two (2) freestanding vehicular entrance signs, does not exceed the total aggregate sign area allotted to the development, is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood, and will not adversely impact the neighborhood in which the signs are located. An increase in size for the two (2) freestanding entrance signs is appropriate given the unique conditions at the site, both in terms of the topography and the curve in the road which restricts visibility of the entrances to the development. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to approve the site plan amendment for a comprehensive sign plan.

## **SITE PLAN AMENDMENT ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, an application for a Site Plan Amendment dated August 14, 2012 for Site Plan #8, was filed with the Office of the Zoning Administrator; and

WHEREAS, as indicated in Staff Reports prepared for the October 20, 2012 County Board 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 Reports; and

WHEREAS, the County Board held a duly-advertised public hearing on that Site Plan Amendment on October 20, 2012 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 master plans, officially approved neighborhood or area development plans, and with the uses permitted and use regulations of the district as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and modified as follows:

**Reallocate up to 42 square feet of sign area from the total 435 square feet of aggregate area to permit an increase in size for two (2) freestanding entrance signs; 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.

WHEREAS, the County Board further finds that permitting the reallocation of sign area to allow freestanding signs that are larger than otherwise permitted does not exceed the total aggregate sign area allotted to the development, is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood, and will not adversely impact the neighborhood in which the signs are located;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED that, as originally requested by an application dated March 12, 1966 for Site Plan # 8, and as such application has been modified, revised, or amended to include the drawings, documents, conditions and other elements designated in Condition 8 below ( which drawings, etc... are hereafter collectively referred to as “Revised Site Plan Application”), for a Site Plan Amendment for a comprehensive sign plan, for the parcel of real property known as RPC # 220-01-648 – 697 and RPC # 220-01-563 – 613; located at 5000, 5009, 5010, 5017, 5020, 5025, 5030, 5033, 5040, 5041, 5049, 5050, 5051, 5060, 5065, 5070, 5075, 5083, and 5091 7th Road South approval is granted and the parcel so described shall be used according to the Site plan as originally approved on March 12, 1966 and amended from time to time as shown in the records of the Office of Zoning administration, and as amended by the Revised Site Plan Application, subject to all previous conditions and the following new condition #8.

8. The applicant agrees to obtain sign permits for the two (2) freestanding entrance signs. The signs shall be in conformance with the drawings dated May 12, 2010 and attached to this staff report, and the two (2) signs shall not exceed a combined total square footage of 42 square feet.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| March 12, 1966    | Approved Z-1865-66-4 (SP# 8) for 135 units on approximately 5 acres of land.   |
| February 18, 1967 | Approved a 1 year extension for Z-1865-66-4 (SP# 8).   |
| March 9, 1968     | Approved a 1 year extension for Z-1865-66-4 (SP# 8).   |
| April 14, 1970    | Approved a site plan amendment to Z-1865-66-4 (SP# 8) to permit the construction of a prefabricated 10' x 9' storage shed. |



ORDER NUMBER: 15239ca  
PROJECT NUMBER: 15239ca  
DATE: 5/12/10  
SHEET NUMBER: 2 of 3

CLIENT: Park Springs Condominiums  
ADDRESS: 703-848-4347  
SALES REP: Stephen G  
PROJECT NO: 35684-001

REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	4/26/10	15209ca

REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	4/26/10	15209ca

REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	4/26/10	15209ca

REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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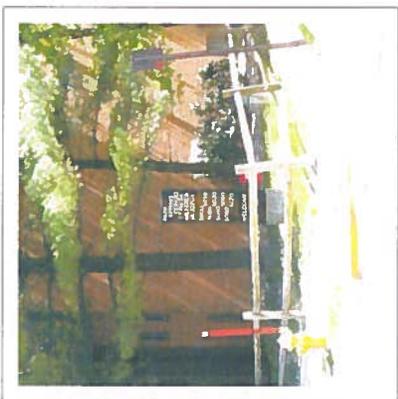
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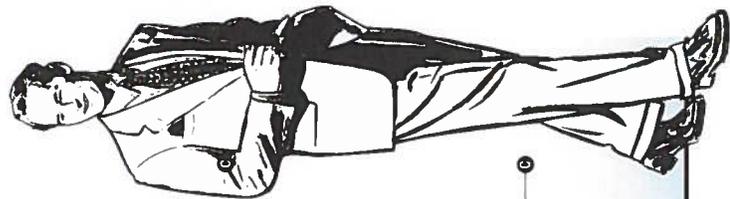
REV #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	4/26/10	15209ca



ELEVATION VIEW EXISTING  
SCALE: NTS



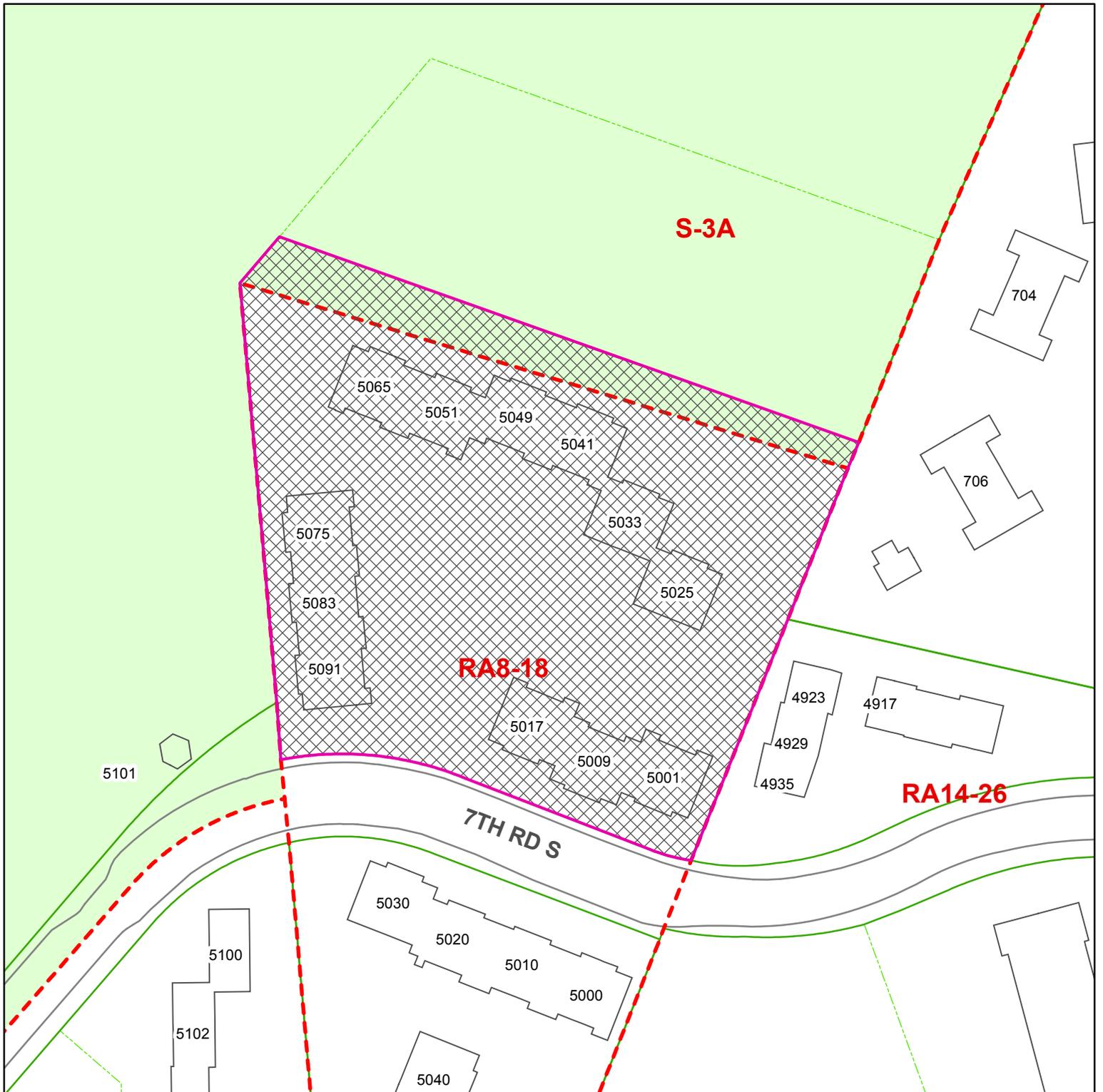
ELEVATION VIEW PROPOSED  
SCALE: NTS



- A aluminum welded accent fin (finish brushed alum. paint)
  - B .080 aluminum monolithic cabinet over angle frame (finish to match dark blue 3M 220-387) w/ applied vinyl graphics of fawn 3M 220-59 & met silver 3M 220-120
  - C support posts are 4" x 4" (finish brushed met silver paint)
- NOTE: client will illuminate each side with floodlighting

ELEVATION DETAIL  
SCALE: 1" = 1'

Colors Formatted ARE REPRESENTATIONAL UNLESS NOTED: ACTUAL COLOR SAMPLES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST. This drawing remains the exclusive property of Gable Signs & Graphics, Inc. It is submitted for your consideration in the purchase of the product(s) manufactured according to these plans. The design cannot be copied in whole or in part, altered or exhibited in any manner without written permission of Gable Signs & Graphics, Inc. Exceptions are previously copyrighted artwork supplied by client.



**SP# 8**

**5001, 5009, 5017, 5025, 5033, 5041, 5049, 5051, 5065, 5075, 5083, 5091 7th Rd. S.**

**RPC 22-001-PCD**

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

**Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development**



 Case Location(s)  
Scale: 1:1,200

**Planning Division**