



MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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DATE June 27, 2025

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

TO: City of Laurel Planning Commission

FROM: Monta Burrough, Director

CASE: Revised Final M-X-T Site Plan for Westside Application No. 973

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Strittmatter Contee LLC
9102 Owens Drive
Manassas Park, VA 20111

OWNER: Strittmatter Contee LLC
9102 Owens Drive
Manassas Park, VA 20111

LOCATION: Westside Boulevard & Van Dusen Road
Laurel, MD 20707

ZONE: Mixed Use Transportation Oriented (M-X-T)

REQUESTED ACTION: Revised Final Site Plan Approval

PREVIOUS ACTION: **July 23, 2012:** Annexation into City of Laurel (*Annexation effective 9/6/2012*)
January 28, 2013: M-X-T Conceptual Plan Approved for 39.87 acres (Ord. No. 1764)
April 22, 2013: M-X-T Conceptual Plan Approved for 19.89 acres (Ord. No. 1770)
June 11, 2013: M-X-T Final Site Plan Design Approved on Parcel C for 484 Multi-Family Units (Resolution No. 13-10-PC)
May 12, 2015: Final Site and Landscape Plan Approved for Westside Townhouses (Resolution No. 15-10-PC)
December 8, 2015: Final Subdivision Plat Approved for 56 townhouse units (Resolution No. 15-13-PC)

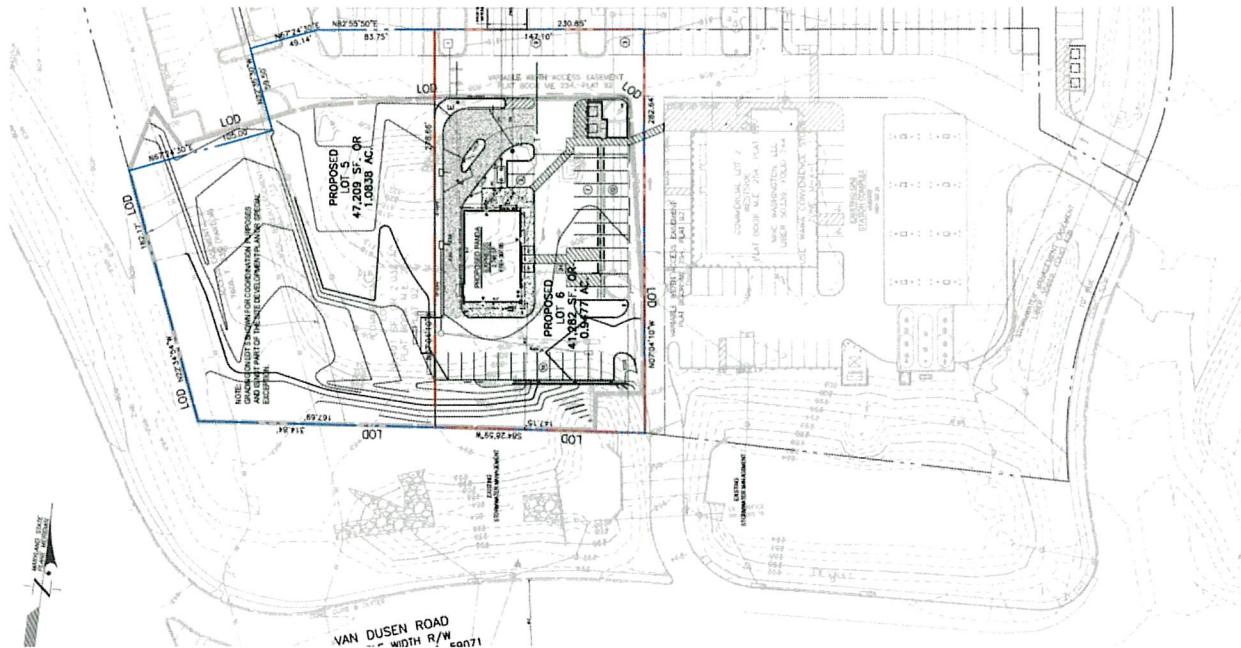
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Applicant, Strittmatter, is seeking approval for a Final Mixed Use Transportation Oriented (M-X-T) Site Plan to develop a Panda Express restaurant with a drive-thru. The property, which is currently zoned as M-X-T, is a vacant lot located next to the existing Wawa gas station at Van Dusen Road. This property encompasses approximately 59.76 acres of land.

Previously, the site was approved for the development of 200,000 square feet of commercial space. The Westside project includes 484 multi-family units, 137 townhomes, and additional commercial retail. The current application is intended to contribute to the redevelopment of the commercial retail space. The property recently had construction of a Starbucks and a commercial strip center. The property was annexed into the City in July 2012.

Below is an overhead of the subject properties.





Below the following Agencies and City Departments were notified.

Department of Agency	Comments Received
City of Laurel Department of Public Works	<p><i>Re-subdivision of Lot 1, into Lots 5 and 6 on behalf of the DPW and offer the following condition of approval:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="935 1106 1282 1803"><i>When Lot # 5 is developed, the developer shall ensure that a 110 v/20 amp service is provided from the proposed building's electric panel at no cost to the City in a 2" PVC conduit to the City's LED Monumental sign along Van Dusen Road, terminating with an above ground disconnect. It shall be the developer's responsibility to provide for and pay for the electric to the sign as maybe required, in perpetuity, as long as the sign remains. It shall be the City's responsibility to make the connection from the Developer's property line/disconnect to the sign within the right-of-way of Van Dusen Road.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While they state the traffic study is still sufficient from 2019, it would be interesting to see the comparison of today's traffic, six (6) years later, and after Covid, but I will defer to ECD on that or maybe it is re-analyzed when the use for the last lot is proposed.. • DPW has no other comments or objections to this currently, as to the Resubdivision of Lot#1 into two Lots. (6/26/25)
City of Laurel Department of Parks and Recreation.	<i>No Issues with the project</i> (6/27/2025)
City of Laurel Fire Marshal	<i>Handicap parking signage must be on a pole no less than 7' AFF (Maryland Accessibility Code) with a \$250.00 fine sign underneath. One van accessible parking space is required with minimum 96" wide access aisle. The designated handicap spots must have a slope of no more than 2.08% in all directions.</i> (6/26/2025)
Laurel Volunteer Fire Department (LVFD)	<i>No Issues with the project</i> (6/29/2025)
Laurel Volunteer Fire Department	<i>No Comments Received.</i>

ANAYLISIS:

The applicant, Strittmatter, is seeking approval of a Final M-X-T Site and Landscape Plan for a Panda Express restaurant that will include a drive-thru. The entire Westside property is currently zoned Mixed-Use Transportation Oriented (M-X-T), and has been the subject of numerous prior subdivision and site plan approvals. The applicant plans to re-subdivide the existing Lot 1 into two new lots: Lot 5 and Lot 6. Lot 6, which will measure 0.9477 acres, will be the site of the new Panda Express restaurant.

The current application for a Final Site Plan in the M-X-T Zone Approval meets the requirements of Section 20-12.5 of the Unified Land Development Code.

The project conforms to the purposes of an M-X-T site per Section 20-12.1 of the Unified Land Development Code as stated below:

(a) To promote the orderly development and redevelopment of land in the vicinity of major intersections, and major transit stops, so that these areas will enhance the economic status of the county and provide an expanding source of desirable employment and living opportunities for its citizens;

The Westside project is bounded on its west side by Interstate 95, and the new “On” ramp for the Interstate 95/Contee Road interchange, Van Dusen Road to the east, and Konterra Drive to the south, and this project is thus situated in the vicinity of major transportation intersections. The proposed combination of apartments, townhomes, and retail uses will add desirable employment and living opportunities for the citizens of Laurel and will enhance the economic status of the City of Laurel and Prince George’s County. The addition of the proposed Panda Express will add another restaurant to serve the residents of Westside and citizens throughout the City of Laurel.

(b) To conserve the value of land and buildings by maximizing the public and private development potential inherent in the location of the zone, this might otherwise become scattered throughout and outside the City. to its detriment;

Westside is a large, mixed-use project that will bring together a variety of uses, and the Panda Express will provide another restaurant opportunity for citizens in this community.

(c) To promote the effective and optimum uses of transit and other major transportation systems;

This property will be part of a development that abuts Interstate 95, with 484 residential multifamily units, potentially 137 townhomes, and 40,000 sq. ft. of retail with access to Interstate 95 is promoting effective and optimum use of a major transportation system. The Panda Express will provide another reason for travelers along Interstate 95 to stop and spend their dollars in the City of Laurel.

(d) To facilitate and encourage a twenty-four hour environment to ensure continuing of the project after workday hours through a maximum of activity, and the interaction between the uses and those who live, work in, or visit the area;

The Westside mixed use project contains two types of residential uses, commercial retail uses and proposed hospitality uses. The retail uses will provide an opportunity for both residents and visitors to the Westside project to secure retail goods and services which are envisioned to include food and beverage items as well as restaurants and other retail service uses. The Panda Express restaurant will add to this mix of uses that will serve not only those who live in the City, but also visitors who may stop as they travel along Interstate 95

(e) To encourage diverse land uses which blend together harmoniously.

Retail/restaurant uses will be proposed to be located toward the south end of the project near the Van Dusen road frontage. A wide public access road, Westside Boulevard, has been constructed through the project to provide access to the entire Westside development. Westside consists of both residential and retail/restaurant uses, and both have been designed to blend harmoniously, thus satisfying the use requirement..

(f) To create dynamic, functional relationships among individual uses within a distinctive visual character and identify;

The Westside development has been planned with great efficiency, combining retail/restaurant/service uses with residential dwellings in a manner that has allowed economies of scale beyond those that could occur for single-purpose projects. The Panda Express will simply add to the efficient plan of Westside.

(g) [Reserved.]

(h) To permit a flexible response to the market;

The residential market is being shaped by an increased demand for apartment rental units and fee simple townhomes, and the residential portion of this project includes both products. The Panda Express will respond to the market for quick-serve restaurants to serve the residents of both types of units.

(i) To provide an opportunity and incentive to the developer to achieve excellence in physical, social, and economic planning.

Westside has achieved this level of excellence, and the Panda Express will serve the needs of its residents, along with other residents of the City of Laurel, and others traveling along Interstate 95.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City of Laurel Planning Commission **APPROVE** the Final M-X-T Site Plan for the proposed Panda restaurant and drive-thru on the Westside property, with the following conditions:

1. The currently existing Lot 1 on the Westside property shall be re-subdivided into two (2) lots, as set forth in Preliminary Plan of Subdivision No. 972, said lots shall be recorded among the land records of Prince George's County, MD, and the proposed Panda Express shall be located upon what is currently proposed to be Lot 6. All construction shall conform to this ordinance, as well as this Final Site and Landscape Plan, as approved by the City of Laurel Planning Commission.
2. Handicapped parking signage shall be on a pole no less than seven feet (7') tall AFF (Maryland Accessibility Code) with a sign underneath indicating that violation of this parking restriction will result in a \$250.00 fine. One (1) van accessible parking space is required with a minimum 96"-wide access aisle. The designated handicapped parking spaces must have a slope of no more than 2.08% in all directions.
3. A drive-thru for the proposed Panda Express restaurant shall only be permitted if a special exception for that drive-thru is approved by the Board of Appeals.
4. The Applicant shall comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations in the development of the Property.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Concept Site Plan
- Statement of Justification

SUBMITTED:

Monta Burrough

Monta Burrough
Director