



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

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DATE June 3, 2020

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT

TO: City of Laurel Planning Commission

FROM: Robert Love, Deputy Director

CASE: Revitalization Overlay Concept Plan No. 904 (Ordinance No. 1955) for Walkable Laurel

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICANT: Laurel Legacy LLC
5420 Wisconsin Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

OWNER: Laurel Legacy LLC
5420 Wisconsin Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

LOCATION: 37 B St., 41 B St., 51 B St., 26 C St., 32 C St.
Laurel, MD 20707

ZONE: Commercial Village (C-V)

REQUESTED ACTION: Revitalization Overlay Concept Plan Approval

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Applicant (Laurel Legacy LLC) is seeking a Revitalization Overlay Concept Plan approval to develop six (6) mixed use buildings that include 73 multifamily rental units, commercial storefronts, parking, and open space areas. The subject property currently is located on five (5) lots at 37 B St., 41 B St., 51 B St., 26 C St., and 32 C St. The property consists of approximately 1.47 acres of land. The current zoning of the property is Commercial Village (C-V).

CURRENT USES:

37 B Street: Vacant Land

41 B Street: Vacant Land

51 B Street: Vacant Land

26 C Street: All Nations Community Church

32 C Street: Parking Lot

SURROUNDING AREA ZONING:

North: Commercial Village (C-V)

East: Single-Family Semi-detached, Two-Family Detached (R-20)

West: Commercial Village (C-V)

South: Commercial Village (C-V)

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	See Comments Below. (6/5/2020)
City of Laurel Police	No Issues with the project (6/2/2020)
City of Laurel Department of Parks and Recreation.	“Have the developer incorporate as much green space as possible, incorporate access from the development to the B Street Riverfront Park entrance and provide some public art.” (6/15/2020)
City of Laurel Fire Marshal	No Issues with the project (6/15/2020)
Laurel Emergency Services Commission	“Approximately 75% of the project is located in FEMA designated 500-year floodplain area which will have to be reviewed.” (5/17/2020)
Laurel Volunteer Fire Department	No Comments Received.
Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad	No Comments Received.
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC)	No Issues with the project (6/9/2020)
Prince George’s County Health Department	No Comments Received.
Maryland State Highway (SHA)	No Issues with the project (5/20/2020)
Prince George’s County Public Schools Department of Capitol Programs	No Comments Received.
Prince George’s County Council, District 1 Member (Councilman Thomas Dernoga)	No Comments Received.
Prince George’s County Office of the Clerk of the Council	No Comments Received.
Maryland Department of Planning	No Comments Received.
Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (MNPPC)	No Issues with the project. (5/22/2020)

Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE)	No Comments Received.
Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE)	No Issues with the project. (6/18/2020)
Verizon	No Comments Received.

COMMENTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:

“This Department has reviewed the Concept Plan to develop six (6) mixed use buildings that include 73 multi-family rental units, commercial storefront, parking, and open space in the City of Laurel. This proposed development is located north of Tolson Alley and between B Street and C Street. The following comments and recommendations are provided at this time.

According to the Concept Plan, the majority of the proposed work will be on site and in the private right-of-way. There will be two (2) vehicular access points on B Street and two (2) vehicular access points on C Street at this development. These access point constructions will result in sidewalk and curb and gutter modifications. The Applicant must repair all the impacted sidewalk, curb & gutter, and pedestrian ramps as needed.

If any roadway closures or public sidewalk closures is needed on a City street, the Applicant must contact this Department for approval prior to the start of work. If any utility cuts are performed on a City Street, the restoration work must follow the City's standards that require the permanent patches in the cut area with a 2" mill and overlay from curb-to-curb and a minimum of 25-feet in each direction of the cut. The Applicant is responsible for all the damage within the public right-of-way. The scope of the restoration work will be determined by this Department. According to the Concept Plan, Tolson Alley from B Street to C Street will become a brick paver type of roadway. Please provide more details regarding the modification to Tolson Alley and identify who will maintain this section of Tolson Alley.

Please provide the refuse and recycle collection plan to this Department as soon as possible. According to this Concept Plan, two (2) access roads to this community are dead-end roadways and do not have sufficient area for the collection trucks to turn around. In the past few years, the City has been promoting work safety and eliminating truck backing up scenarios. If this community intends on having the Department of Public Works collect refuse and recycle, the Applicant needs to identify the collection routes without our trucks having to back-in or back-out for these collections.

According to the Applicant's traffic study, a signal is not warranted at C Street and Main Street. Please note that the City has received concerns from residents regarding sight distance issues along Main Street at A Street, B Street, C Street and Avondale Street. With an expected increase in traffic from this development, we are requiring that the Applicant conduct an All-Way Stop study at Main Street and C Street and host a public hearing regarding this possible modification. We recommend restricting street parking on Main Street further away from C Street to improvement sight distance and installing Solar LED STOP signs on eastbound and westbound Main Street at C Street. The high visible crosswalks at B Street and Main Street and C Street and Main Street need to be upgraded with street print technology.”

ANAYLSIS:

The Applicant (Laurel Legacy LLC) is seeking a Revitalization Overlay Concept Plan approval to develop six (6) mixed use buildings that include 73 multifamily rental units, commercial storefronts, parking, and open space areas. The site will utilize the revitalization overlay designation, stated in Section 20-13.3(a) of the Unified Land Development Code. This will include modifications of the height, parking, and density of the proposed development. The project will utilize Tolson Alley as a use not only for passing vehicles but also for use by pedestrians. The project aims to be a midpoint destination between Main Street and Riverfront Park.

PARKING

The Applicant will be providing 76 parking spaces on the site. This will include a mix of 73 standard and compact spaces as well as three (3) required ADA parking spaces. Similar to the C Street Flats located next to this project, half of the site is located in the parking modification zone which allows for a one to one ratio of units to parking. Section 20-13.3(a) of the Unified Land Development Code allows for modification of various standards in the ordinance including parking. Because of this provision, staff will be applying the parking modification zone requirements to the entire site in order to keep the site consistent within itself and the surrounding area. Based on the uses associated with the site, all parking requirements are being satisfied as indicated below:

Proposed Use	Proposed Parking Spaces	Required Parking Spaces
71 Rental Units	74 spaces (includes 3 ADA spaces)	74 spaces (includes 3 ADA spaces)
Restaurant/Café/Brew Pub	0 spaces	0 spaces
2 Live Work Units	1 space per unit (2 total spaces)	1 space per unit
Fitness Center	0 spaces	0 spaces (use is accessory to the building)
Co-Working Space	0 spaces	0 spaces (use is accessory to the building)
Total	76 spaces	76 spaces

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Per the City Code Article III Affordable Housing Program, the Applicant will need to provide three (3) percent of the units for workforce housing at a rate of 50 percent of the median income in Prince George's County. The Applicant will also need to provide three (3) percent of the units for moderate income housing at a rate of 60 percent of the median income in Prince George's County. In total they will be required to provide six (6) units at the adjusted rates indicated in the City Code.

Section 20-13.1 of the Unified Land Development Code states that it shall be the purpose and intent of Revitalization Overlay (RO) to be an alternative form of development or redevelopment designed to:

(a) Create additional economic development opportunities for property owners within the City of Laurel to upgrade, enhance, demolish or revitalize their properties using additional flexibility offered the overlay zone, by, among others, offering superior amenities, land uses, or achieving superior land design to warrant intensification or increased density of properties in areas that are targeted for their potential for economic development.

The proposed project will increase population density in the Main Street area, reinforcing a market for additional retail development. In particular, the proposed project could create new development opportunities along Main Street.

(b) Enhance the redevelopment of the business corridors within the City of Laurel, and to allow the upgrading of various housing opportunities, which, by their age or state of disrepair, have become obsolete, increasingly vacant, or become contributing to destabilizing property values within the City.

The proposed project will provide a variety of housing types for new residents of the Main Street area with an elevator building, walk up apartments and lofts, and news style units resembling townhouses in mixed use development.

(c) Enhance opportunities for improvements to the retail, housing, employment or entertainment offerings within the City limits, which are necessary to maintain economic balance and continued prosperity of the City.

The proposed project will target prospective residents interested in an urban lifestyle that includes retail and entertainment uses suited to the Main Street environment.

(d) Allow for increased, consolidated, or integrated development in order to meet the need for certain targeted land uses, which may be deficient or missing within the current marketplace.

The integrated and consolidated design of the proposed project allows the creating of a variety of public spaces and housing types and the activation/improvement of Tolson Alley. Without this integrated and consolidated approach, these new public spaces would not be possible.

(e) Permit the development for a hierarchy of overlay types, which reflect the location and conditions contained within specific areas within the City.

N/A

(f) The conditions and restrictions of such an overlay is considered an optional form of development, which is in addition to the land uses and restrictions contained within the base zoning of any property located within a revitalization overlay.

The Applicant acknowledges this intent of the Revitalization Overlay.

(g) Acknowledge that the development and approval of any revitalization overlay zone is a unique and specific approval to a unique parcel of groups of parcels, whose approval is conditioned upon meeting the objectives and specific goals of using such an overlay option.

The Applicant acknowledges this intent of the Revitalization Overlay.

(h) Facilitate redevelopment and provisions of specific land uses, configurations, which are recommended for the continued development and economic health, well-being and stability of the neighborhoods of the City.

The proposed project includes the types of urban residential buildings, retail uses, and public open spaces appropriate for the Main Street area.

(i) Allow intensification or changes in land uses, mixes of land uses, and access based on the ability of the provision of municipal and other public services, the general adequacy of transportation capacity to accomplish such development approvals as deemed necessary by the Mayor and City Council.

The proposed project is consistent with existing capacities for all relevant facilities and services.

(j) Retain the stability of the retail, restaurant, and entertainment establishments by providing development consistent with the demographics and income characteristics of City residents, and the reduce the exportation of the consumer spending potential of City residents by providing improved offerings to retain the spending by City residents for consumer products and services within City limits, where possible.

The proposed project will be marketed intentionally to people who prefer the walkable character of Main Street and will benefit Main Street small business.

(k) Encourage integrated development, consolidation of properties, in order to reduce access points to major highways; reduce visual confusion inherent in older commercial highway corridors such as U.S. Route 1.

The proposed project maintains the urban character of the Main Street neighborhood. It minimizes the presence of the automobile by careful treatment of parking areas.

(l) Increase the attractiveness of the City for the potential of its potential in the areas of employment creation, tourism development, and improvements to its retail and restaurant offerings for business development, stabilization and improvement of its neighborhoods.

The Applicants overall approach is according to them one of Strategic Placemaking- creating places that are uniquely attractive to people who want to live in the Historic Main Street neighborhood and by doing so create the circumstances for economic growth, improved livability downtown, and sustainability. Project goals include:

-To bring more residents to Main Street and help create mass of people who choose to live in town.

-To connect new development to Main Street so both new and existing development can benefit.

-To create a place that is unique in the Historic District but also unique to the Historic District

(m) Create a stable redevelopment of the core area of the existing City limits, to make potential annexation of areas which may petition the City to compliment the core area by providing complimentary land uses to build on existing development.

The proposed project replaces vacant and under-used parcels with new development in the core area of the existing City.

(n) Revitalization overlays are not permitted by right, but reflect a negotiated development agreement that is unique to a specific proposal, or development that reflects the applicant's ability to achieve the goals and objectives of this alternative form of development. The Mayor and City Council is not obligated to approve any form of optional development if it concludes that the proposal does not meet with the purpose and intent of these regulations. Approvals within any overlay do not usurp or diminish the jurisdiction of the City's Historic District Commission, if the overlay is located within their jurisdiction.

The Applicant acknowledges this intent of the Revitalization Overlay.

(o) Setbacks of any type will not be waived, modified, or amended unless alternate methods will provide equal or superior protection to surrounding uses.

The Applicant acknowledges this intent of the Revitalization Overlay.

(p) To conclude that the use of this overlay option does not diminish, modify, or in any way alter the applicant's right to development their property using the conventional base zone affixed to the property.

The Applicant acknowledges this intent of the Revitalization Overlay.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City of Laurel Planning Commission Recommend approval **APPROVE** the Revitalization Overlay Concept Plan No. 904 for the Walkable Laurel property with the following conditions:

- 1) The Applicant shall ensure that the development is in compliance with all City codes, building regulations and affordable housing laws.
- 2) The Applicant shall provide a phasing plan and timetable for completion of any required on-site or off-site improvements, amenities, or any aspect of the concept approval at the time of Final Revitalization Overlay Plan submission.
- 3) The Applicant shall provide three (3) units at the 50% Work Force Housing Income and three (3) units at the 60% Moderate Housing Income.
- 4) The Applicant shall obtain approval for a Plat of Consolidation prior to Final Revitalization Overlay Plan approval.
- 5) The Applicant shall obtain Forest Conservation Application approval prior to Final Revitalization Overlay Plan approval.

- 6) The Applicant shall obtain approval for the Final Revitalization Overlay Plan from the City of Laurel Planning Commission prior to the beginning of construction.
- 7) The Applicant shall install three (3) solar LED stop signs at the intersection of C Street and Main Street prior to issuance of the first Use and Occupancy permit for the project.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Concept Site Plan
- Statement of Justification
- Traffic Study
- Concept Storm Water Management Plan

SUBMITTED:

Christian L. Pulley

Christian L. Pulley

Director