

**12500 ARDENNES AVENUE**

**SITE PLAN No. 8202000080**

**SITE PLAN NARRATIVE AND JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Ardennes Partners, LLC (the “Applicant”) is the owner and developer of the property identified as 12500 Ardennes Avenue, located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue in Rockville (the “Property”). The Property is comprised of approximately 75,272 square feet of gross tract area, which is the basis for the density calculation as described herein<sup>1</sup>, and approximately 56,745 square feet of net lot area. The Property is an existing subdivided lot of record, which is identified on a plat entitled “Spring Lake Park Halpine Subdivision” recorded in the Land Records of Montgomery County at Plat No. 10000 on August 23, 1971.<sup>2</sup>

The Property is currently zoned CR-2.0, C-1.5, R-2.0, H-145T pursuant to the Countywide District Map Amendment, approved by the Montgomery County Council (sitting as the District Council) on July 15, 2014 and effective on October 30, 2014.<sup>3</sup> The Property is located within the Metro Core Area 2 as identified in the Twinbrook Sector Plan, approved and adopted in January 2009 (the “Sector Plan”).

On July 18, 2019, the Planning Board approved Sketch Plan No. 320180200 for the Property (“Sketch Plan”) allowing for a maximum of 198,718 square feet of residential development, consisting of

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<sup>1</sup> The gross tract area of the Property is comprised of approximately 56,745 square feet of existing lot area, 14,043 square feet previously dedicated to the public right-of-way for Ardennes Avenue, 3,989 square feet previously dedicated to the public right-of-way for Twinbrook Parkway, and 495 square feet to be dedicated pursuant to this application.

<sup>2</sup> Approximately 13,580 square feet of the Property was transferred to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority by deed dated August 26, 1980, which is recorded in the Land Records at Liber 5568 in Folio 172. Approximately 1,582 square feet was transferred to Montgomery County, Maryland by deed dated August 16, 1983, which is recorded in the Land Records at Liber 6200 in Folio 493. Pursuant to Section 50.3.3.B of the Subdivision Regulations, these conveyances represent an exemption to replatting requirements and, therefore, no new preliminary plan is required for redevelopment of the Property.

<sup>3</sup> The Zoning Ordinance was substantially rewritten and adopted as amended on July 15, 2014, effective October 30, 2014. This revision removed the Transit-Oriented Mixed-Use 2 (TMX-2) Zone that was the Property’s prior zoning. Concurrent with the Countywide District Map Amendment, the Property was rezoned from the TMX-2 Zone to the existing CR Zone.

approximately 225 units. The Applicant is now submitting this Site Plan Application (the “Application”) under the optional method of development in the CR Zone in accordance with Section 7.3.4 of Chapter 59 (the “Zoning Ordinance”) of the Montgomery County Code, 2014, as amended (the “County Code”). The Applicant proposes to develop the Property with a residential project containing a maximum of 198,718 square feet in the form of up to 203 multifamily residential units (including 15% moderately priced dwelling units, or “MPDUs,” and Workforce Housing Units, or “WFHU’s,” pursuant to the provisions of Section 59.4.5.2.C.ii of the Zoning Ordinance) as well as above-grade structured parking, private amenities and recreational facilities, and public open space and amenities (the “Project”). As described in further detail below, the Project will allow for redevelopment of an underutilized office building with a transit-oriented, multi-family residential project that “continue[s] the neighborhood street pattern of buildings oriented to the street, streetscaping, and small urban open spaces” as envisioned by the Sector Plan. Sector Plan, p. 33.

## II. THE PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Property is located in the southwest corner of the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue, just north of the intersection of Fishers Lane and Twinbrook Parkway, and within a quarter of a mile of the Twinbrook Metro Station. The City of Rockville’s municipal limits are located immediately to the north and west of the Property. The Property is currently improved with a one-story office building with approximately 21,700 square feet of above-grade area that was constructed in the 1960’s, as well as surface parking.

The surrounding area is comprised of a mix of established residential and non-residential buildings, including the JBG Companies’ Twinbrook Station mixed-use project in the City of Rockville, which permits up to 1,596 dwelling units, 325,000 square feet of office uses, and 220,000 square feet of retail uses with building heights reaching up to 170 feet. The Property is immediately to the northeast of the Alaire, a multi-family residential building within the Twinbrook Station project, consisting of 279 units. Immediately to the south of the Property is an Exxon gas station. JBG’s Terano (part of the Twinbrook Station project) is located further to the south across Fishers Lane and includes approximately 88 multi-family dwelling units in a five-story building. An office building with approximately 150,000 square feet and a building height of up to 95 feet is located to the north of Ardennes Avenue. Across Twinbrook Parkway to the east is

another office building with approximately 223,000 square feet and a maximum building height of approximately 82 feet.

### **III. THE PROJECT**

As noted above, the Application proposes the redevelopment of the underutilized Property into a multi-family building with up to 203 residential units (including a significant percentage of MPDUs and WFHUs) and internal structured parking. The Project will include both street-activating public open space and private amenity uses along Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway. The proposed FAR of the Project is at the maximum residential density of 2.64 FAR, which includes the bonus density allowed for the provision of 15% MPDUs and 10% WFHUs pursuant to Section 59.4.5.2.C of the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed maximum height is 100 feet, well below the maximum 145 feet allowed by the zoning for the Property.

All access to the Project will be from an existing curb-cut along Ardennes Avenue, on the northwestern edge of the Property. The entrance to the parking garage will be consolidated with the loading and service access. The Applicant anticipates that the above-grade parking garage will include two levels of parking with approximately 182 parking spaces. Pursuant to Section 59.6.2.4.C of the Zoning Ordinance, the Project will also include 95 long term and 5 short term bicycle parking spaces to accommodate future residents at this transit-oriented location.

The residential pedestrian entrance and lobby are also proposed along Ardennes Avenue and the private amenity spaces for residents are proposed at the corner of Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway. To this end, the Project will bring activity to the pedestrian level along both street frontages.

#### Proposed Architecture

The proposed building will front the adjacent streets to create urban edges while also setting back appropriately from adjacent neighbors to the east. The building will have a brick base defined by improved streetscapes and building entries, a defined middle with bay projections that add depth and relief to the building, and a lighter top. The building will utilize a variety of materials, such as brick, metal panels, and cementitious board and siding in a variety of textures and colors to enhance the building. The primary gesture of the building will be a projecting bay at the intersection of Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook

Parkway that will not only express the building's corner and relate to the proposed open space, but will also become a landmark for the neighborhood. The shorter facade along Twinbrook Parkway will not be parallel with Twinbrook, but rather will taper away into the transition into the Ardennes Avenue facade to allow for better visibility at the acute intersection. This transition will also allow for the proposed open space to be more visible and accessible from two directions. The proposed entry and ground level amenities will flank the proposed open space and have integrated functions.

The building will take advantage of the approximately 12-foot grade change from the southeast corner to the northeast corner of the Property by locating the vehicular and loading entries at the lower portion of the site and burying the lowest level of parking against the higher terrain to the south. The lower garage level will then be wrapped on both street sides, and the second level of parking will be wrapped with 3 sides of residential. The typical floor above the courtyard levels will have a mixture of lighter materials, such as cementitious panels and siding in various colors, window sizes, and balconies. The courtyards are ample in size and will be treated with hardscape and landscape which will not only be attractive to the proposed residents and serve as their private space, but also will be visible from neighboring properties.

#### Public Use Space and Streetscape Concept

The Property is comprised of approximately 1.73 acres of gross tract area and has frontage on two master planned rights-of-way. Therefore, pursuant to Section 59.4.5.4.B.1 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Project must provide 5% public open space as measured against the Net Site area (56,745 square feet). The Applicant is currently proposing approximately 3,800 square feet (6.7%) of open space, which will exceed this requirement, to be located primarily at the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue. This space will be located near the proposed entrance and serve to activate the corner. The corner plaza will allow neighbors to use the space as a gathering place and a stopping node. The space can be traversed as neighbors commute to and from Metro or other amenities in the area. The plaza is flanked by the building's social amenity areas that will provide eyes on the plaza making it safe, active and feeling public. The area will be a combination of hardscape plaza and lush plantings in stepped planters to mediate the existing grade, and the space will be furnished with built-in benches and chairs. Public art will form a focal point that will further animate the space and engage

the users. In addition, the corner plaza, in combination with other open space across Ardennes Avenue, act as a gateway feature into the residential neighborhood.

### Green Features and Stormwater Management

Currently, there is no stormwater management on-site. The Project will therefore significantly improve stormwater control on the Property and will provide Environmental Site Design to the Maximum Extent Practicable. This will be accomplished by providing micro-bioretenion planters at grade and a green roof area on the roof of the podium. In addition, underground storage will be provided to slow the flow into the storm drain system and provide additional stormwater quality treatment. A waiver will be requested for the remaining Environmental Site Design volume not met by these facilities.

With regard to the specific environmental objectives outlined on page 28 of the Sector Plan, the Project will meet them as described below:

- *Increase the amount of pervious surface to improve the quality and reduce the quantity of stormwater run-off, mitigate heat island effects, and contribute to a green and pedestrian friendly environment.*

While the Project cannot increase the amount of pervious surface on the Property, given its relatively small and constrained size, it will help achieve the same objectives by significantly enhancing stormwater controls, improving both quantity and quality, and will mitigate heat island effects and create a greener environment through incorporation of a significant amount of tree canopy. This includes planters on the podium roof that will be deep enough to support trees.

- *A significant portion of paved area should be shaded through trees within five years of occupancy or paved with reflective materials.*

The Project includes trees at ground level to shade the sidewalks and open space, as well as on the podium roof to provide shade at the pool deck and around the building. Reflective paving materials will also be utilized in both of these areas in furtherance of this objective.

- *Street trees should be spaced and sized to create 30 percent canopy coverage on redeveloped areas, and open space should be planted and substantially pervious.*

Street trees will be spaced per applicable standards to encourage canopy coverage. The Project includes proposed planting areas and tree coverage throughout the open space.

- *Improve air quality through development decisions that increase tree canopy and pervious surfaces, and the use of reflective materials.*

As noted above, the Project includes significant new plantings around the building and the use of reflective materials.

- *Encourage public and private projects to use emerging technologies in building, site, and road design that incorporate stormwater treatment features into urban design and streetscape options. They can include, but not be limited to green streets (as defined in the County Road Code), water features that buffer noise and capture stormwater, graywater cisterns, and open spaces that can capture, filter and reuse stormwater.*

The Project will provide stormwater management through micro-bioretenion planters provided on the roof of the podium. These planters will provide tree canopy and plantings on the building to minimize the hardscape and provide an above-ground oasis.

- *Encourage redevelopment that creates connected street patterns that contribute to a safe and pleasant pedestrian and bicycle network that encourages residents and employees to replace auto trips with walking and bicycling options.*

The proposed sidewalk along Ardennes Avenue will be shifted away from the street edge and align with the existing sidewalk to the west to create a tree lined street frontage that will be much more pedestrian-friendly. Ardennes Avenue has existing bike lanes within the street to connect to the regional bicycle network. Along Twinbrook Parkway, a 13-foot wide shared pedestrian and bike path is also proposed in furtherance of this objective.

- *Support a shuttle bus system that encourages residents and employees to replace short auto trips.*

The site is within walking distance of the Metro, and thus, a need for a shuttle bus system is not anticipated.

- *Encourage site and building design that locates public and other occupied spaces away from noise sources. Encourage new development to integrate noise mitigation measures at the earliest possible stage.*

The proposed building design focuses the private open space internal to the building and oriented towards adjacent courtyards. The public open space is appropriately oriented to the corner to activate the area. An initial noise evaluation determined that noise levels at this location are within acceptable levels for open space.

**IV. THE PROJECT SATISFIES THE REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL OF A SITE PLAN UNDER THE OPTIONAL METHOD OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE CR ZONE**

Section 59.7.3.4.E.2 of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the findings that the Planning Board must make before approving a site plan application. The following analysis establishes the Application's satisfaction of, and conformance to, these standards:

*To approve a site plan, the Planning Board must find that the proposed development:*

*a. satisfies any previous approval that applies to the site;*

As noted above, Sketch Plan Application No. 321080200 was approved by the Planning Board on July 18, 2019 (Resolution issued on October 21, 2019). The Application conforms to the sketch plan approval in all respects.

*b. satisfies under Section 7.7.1.B.5 the binding elements of any development plan or schematic development plan in effect on October 29, 2014.*

This section is not applicable to the Application, as the Property is not subject to any development plan or schematic development plan.

*c. satisfies under Section 7.7.1.B.5 any green area requirement in effect on October 29, 2014 for a property where the zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was the result of a Local Map Amendment.*

This section is not applicable to the Application, as the zoning classification on October 29, 2014 was not the result of a Local Map Amendment.

*d. satisfies applicable use standards, development standards, and general requirements under this Chapter.*

The Project satisfies the applicable use standards, development standards, and general requirements of Chapter 59 of the Zoning Ordinance, as explained more fully below:

**A. Use standards**

Section 59.3.1.6. of the Zoning Ordinance lists uses permitted in the CR zone. The Project proposed multifamily dwelling units, which is a permitted use.

***B. Development Standards for the Optional Method of Development***

Section 59.4.5.4.B of the Zoning Ordinance sets forth the development standards for development under the optional method in the CR zone. The Site Plan satisfies all of these development standards as described below and detailed in the development standards chart shown on the Site Plan.

*(a) Open space.*

Because the Property's tract area is approximately 1.73 acres and the Property has two right-of-way frontages, the Project is required to provide 5% public open space as measured against the site area of the Property. As shown on the Site Plan, the Project is proposing approximately 6.7% open space (approximately 3800 square feet) in satisfaction of this requirement.

*(b) Lot, density, and height.*

The Project utilizes the optional method of development and proposes to develop the Property with the maximum total residential density permitted for the Property under the CR Zone. The Site Plan includes a 32% residential density bonus (above and beyond the standard 2.00 FAR) achieved through the provision of 15% MPDUs, as well as WFHUs. Additionally, the Project only proposes a building height of up to 100 feet while the existing CR zoning permits up to 145 feet.

*(c) Placement.*

Section 59.4.5.4.B.3 of the Zoning Ordinance provides that setbacks for principal buildings, accessory structures, and parking are established by the site plan approval process. The proposed setbacks are depicted on the plans included with the Application.

*(d) Form.*

The site plan established the form standards for minimum transparency, blank walls, and active entrances set forth in Section 59.4.5.4.B.4 of the Zoning Ordinance

***C. General Requirements for Optional Method in the CR Zone***

Section 59.4.5.4.A of the Zoning Ordinance lists the general requirements for development under the optional method in the CR zone. The Site Plan meets all of these general requirements as follows:



1. *Procedure for approval.*

Section 59.4.5.4.A of the Zoning Ordinance requires a site plan to be approved for any development on a property with an approved Sketch Plan. The Site Plan application and accompanying materials are therefore being submitted in accordance with this requirement.

2. *Public benefit points and categories.*

The Application contains a Public Benefits Calculations Chart outlining how this optional method development Project will provide significant public benefits in order to realize the maximum permitted density on the Property. The Project is anticipated to provide in excess of the minimum 100 public benefit points required, as outlined in that chart included with the Application and more fully set forth below:

- *Transit proximity.* The entire Property is located within a one-quarter mile radius of the Twinbrook Metrorail (Level 1) Station and is therefore seeking 40 points in this category.
- *Connectivity and Mobility.* The Project is seeking 10 points for providing fewer parking spaces than the maximum allowed under the Zoning Ordinance.
- *Diversity of Uses and Activities.* The Applicant is seeking 30 points for providing 15% MPDUs, 2.5% above the minimum required (12 points per 1% MPDUs above 12.5%).
- *Quality building and site design.*

The Application is entitled to receive 30 public benefit points for exceptional design, public art and structured parking in the quality building and site design category for the reasons set forth below:

- *Exceptional design.* The Project will incorporate visual and functional aspects that exceptionally enhance the character of the setting, entitling the Project to receive 10 points in this category as outlined below:
- Providing innovative solutions in response to the immediate context: The proposed building will be replacing the existing office building and surface parking with a new residential building that creates urban relationships to the streets, provides covered internalized parking, and sites the building according to view angles and sun exposure.
- Creating a sense of place that serves as a landmark: The proposed building will be expressing the intersection of the two fronting streets with the major architectural

element of the building at the corner, as well as with the proposed open space location, which will relate to the internal common spaces of the building.

- Enhancing the public realm in a distinct and original manner: The Project includes improvements to the sidewalk zones of both Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue and the building itself will provide connections to the streetscape that will follow the grade of the high point along Twinbrook Parkway down to the low point of Ardennes Avenue. More specifically, there will be a main building entry along Ardennes Avenue that will be flanked by open space at the corner to the east and then direct access units to the west along Ardennes Avenue. The vehicular entry is pulled back from the neighboring building to the west, and a landscaped buffer is provided to the open space at the intersection of Higgins Place and Ardennes Avenue. The electric utilities along Ardennes Avenue will be placed underground, and there will be a secondary building exit along the high point of Twinbrook Parkway that will fully engage the proposed building to the streetscape.
- Introducing materials, forms or building methods unique to the immediate vicinity or applied in a unique way: The proposed building will be continuing the residential character of the buildings along Higgins Place and Fishers Lane; however, the proposed massing will likely include projecting bays and recessed balconies to give depth and shadow to the facades. A larger projecting bay at the corner of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue is also proposed, which will semi-cover the proposed open space. The proposed design will also utilize lasting building materials such as brick, metal panels and cement board in a contrasting manner to give texture to the base of the building, depth and rhythm to the middle floors of the building and lightness to the top and courtyard of the building. The façade also incorporates a continuous palette of materials and colors on all facades of the building so that each elevation compliments another, creating a comprehensive building.
- Designing compact, infill development so living, working and shopping environments are more pleasurable and desirable on a problematic site: The proposed building will be maximizing the density while creating as much open space as possible on an irregularly shaped site with a major topographic change. The building will be fronting the two major streets to create urban edges and the

streetscape improvements will allow the public and future residents improved routes to the metro either via Higgins Place or Twinbrook Parkway.

- Integrating low-impact development methods into the overall design of the site and building, beyond green building or site requirements: The major component of the low impact design will be the use of bio-retention on site; however, it will be utilized above and beyond standard methods by dispersing the bio-retention through-out the site at multiple levels. In this regard, there will be bio-retention at the main courtyard 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level, at the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor level to the west to further enhance the buffer between the neighboring property, and at the ground floor levels within the property area as part of the streetscape improvements. The Project will also have less parking than the maximum allowed and a cool certified roof.
- *Structured parking.* The Project will provide structured parking, with all of the 182 parking spaces to be provided in an above-grade garage, achieving 10 points in this public benefit category.
- *Public Art.* The Project will include a public art component in the public open space at the corner of Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway, and is seeking 10 points for this category.
- *Protection and enhancement of the natural environment.*
  - The Project will include purchase of a portion of a Building Lot Termination (BLT) easement (approximately 0.27 of a BLT easement) for 2.4 public benefit points in this category.
  - The Project is seeking 10 points for the provision of a cool roof.

(c) *Building type.*

The Project proposes a multi-family/apartment building. Section 59.4.1.6 of the Zoning Ordinance notes that all building types are allowed in the CR Zone, and Section 59.4.1 .5.E identifies an apartment building as “a building containing 3 or more dwelling units vertically and horizontally arranged.”

*(d) Compatibility standards.*

Section 59.4.1.8.A of the Zoning Ordinance contains setback compatibility standards, and Section 59.4. 1.8.B contains height compatibility standards. Section 59.4.1.8.A notes that the setback compatibility standards only apply to properties in the CR Zone that abut a property in an Agricultural, Rural Residential, Residential Detached, or Residential Townhouse zone that is vacant or improved with an agricultural or residential use, and proposes development of an apartment, multi-use, or general building type. Since the Property does not abut any property located in an Agricultural, Rural Residential, Residential Detached, or Residential Townhouse Zone, the setback compatibility standards do not apply to the Property or Project.

Further, Section 59.4.1. 8.B states that the height compatibility standards similarly only apply to CR-zoned properties that abut or confront a property in an Agricultural, Rural Residential, Residential Detached, or Residential Townhouse zone that is vacant or improved with an agricultural or residential use. As noted, the Property does not abut or confront any property located in an Agricultural, Rural Residential, Residential Detached, or Residential Townhouse Zone; therefore, the height compatibility standards are not applicable to the Property or Project.

***D. General Development Requirements***

Article 59.6 of the Zoning Ordinance contains general development requirements. The Application meets all of these requirements, as follows:

*(i) Site Access (Division 6.1)*

Vehicular access to the Project is proposed from Ardennes Avenue, providing direct access to the structured parking and loading area. Pedestrian access is also provided directly from Ardennes Avenue, although some individual units will also have direct access from the Twinbrook Parkway frontage.

*(ii) Parking, Queuing, and Loading (Division 6.2)*

An internal structured parking facility will provide the required parking for the Project. More than the minimum number of vehicle parking spaces required for the Project pursuant to Section 59.6.2 of the Zoning Ordinance is provided, as shown on the tables included on the Site Plan Cover Sheet. All

of the proposed parking spaces will comply with the design standards identified in Section 59.6.2.5 of the Zoning Ordinance. Similarly, the proposed loading space will comply with the dimension, location and maneuvering requirements identified in Section 59.6.2.8 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Bicycle parking will also be provided in accordance with Section 59.6.2.4.C of the Zoning Ordinance and will satisfy the bicycle parking design standards identified in Section 59.6.2.6 of the Zoning Ordinance.

*(iii) Open Space and Recreation (Division 6.3)*

Section 59.6.3.2 of the Zoning Ordinance references Division 4.5 as the controlling standard for open space requirements in the CR Zone. As noted above, the Project will require 5% open space and is proposing to meet this requirement primarily through the provision of a significant open space at the corner of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue.

*(iv) General Landscaping and Outdoor Lighting (Division 6.4)*

Landscaping and lighting will be provided in accordance with Section 59.6.4.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the Project is safe, compatible with the surrounding community, and improves water and air quality. The Project will include new street lighting along the Property's frontages and a comprehensive lighting scheme designed to be attractive and safe. As shown on the landscape plans included with the Application, the Project also includes significant landscaping, utilizing a variety of species, primarily native.

*(v) Screening Requirements (Division 6.5)*

Section 59.6.5 of the Zoning Ordinance does not apply to the Project, which is being developed under the optional method.

*(vi) Outdoor Display and Storage (Division 6.6)*

This Division is inapplicable because the Project does not propose any outside display or storage.

*(vii) Signs (Division 6.7)*

The Applicant will obtain all necessary approvals from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services ("MCDPS") for proposed signage on the Property.

e. *satisfies the applicable requirements of:*

(i) *Chapter 19, Erosion, Sediment Control, and Stormwater Management; and*

Pursuant to Chapter 19 of the County Code, the Applicant will provide sediment and erosion control and water quality and quantity treatment for stormwater in accordance with applicable laws. A concept stormwater management plan has been submitted with this application. In addition to meeting the technical stormwater management requirements, the Project will also conform with the specific recommendations of the Sector Plan regarding stormwater improvements and green features, as discussed more fully above. An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will also be submitted for approval by MCDPS along with the Final Stormwater Management Plans.

(ii) *Chapter 22A, Forest Conservation*

Pursuant to Chapter 22A of the Montgomery County Code, the Applicant will provide forest conservation in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A Forest Conservation Plan demonstrating compliance with applicable codes is included in the Application. A tree variance request has also been included with the Application to allow for impacts to the champion crabapple tree on the Property related to its relocations off-site.

f. *provides safe, well-integrated parking, circulation patterns, building massing and, where required, open spaces and site amenities;*

The building location and overall site design proposed in the Application, including the proposed open space, circulation system and landscaping, will be adequate, safe and efficient. The proposed building wraps the main level of the parking with dwelling units and amenities facing the street and will be at a lower grade than the existing gas station to the south. The building will also be set back from the neighboring apartment building to the west and will wrap the second internal partial parking level with dwelling units and green space to shield the parking from view. The main courtyard level will be elevated facing south and the two wings of the residential typical floors will be set back slightly from the south property line with minimal fenestration so as not to impact future development nor conflict with the existing amenity spaces of the neighboring building to the southwest.

The circulation pattern to the parking and around the site is logical and safe, and the open space is located in a highly visible location easily accessed by pedestrians and cyclists. The private amenities for residents are located along Ardennes Avenue and at the corner of Ardennes and Twinbrook

Parkway, activating these frontages. The elevated courtyard and pool are shielded from those rights-of-way by the residential wings. As more fully described above, the massing of the building provides an appropriate street edge along the adjacent rights-of-way and the height is compatible with the existing and proposed surrounding developments. Overall, the proposed development will provide a high degree of safety, convenience, and amenity for the Project's residents, as well as for area residents generally.

- g. substantially conforms with the recommendations of the applicable master plan and any guidelines approved by the Planning Board that implement the applicable plan;*

As noted above, the Property is located in the area defined by the Sector Plan as the Metro Core Area 2. The Project conforms to the vision and objectives outlined in the Sector Plan for the Property as follows:

- *Metro Core Area 2. These properties contain a gas station and office building next to the Twinbrook Station project. The 1992 Plan recommended this site for the O-M floating zone on an 1-4 base zone. Redevelopment density and mixed-uses should continue the Twinbrook Station pattern of buildings oriented to the street and create pedestrian connections. The full 2.0 FAR is appropriate in this area, but any development above 1.5 must be applied to residential uses. The site could also redevelop completely with residential uses at 2.0 FAR, and provides MPDUs and workforce housing. (Sector Plan, p. 33)*

The Application is consistent with the Sector Plan's vision for the Property as it represents redevelopment of this underutilized site with residential uses, including both MPDUs and WFHUs, and orients the proposed building to the adjacent streets. Pursuant to Section 59.4.5.2.C.2.a of the Zoning Ordinance, the Application is eligible for a 32% residential density bonus as a result of providing 15% MPDUs (22% bonus), as well as WFHUs (10% bonus).

- *Development should continue the neighborhood street pattern of buildings oriented to the street, streetscaping, and small urban spaces. (Sector Plan, P 33)*

The Project's design will place the street-activating private amenity spaces along Ardennes Avenue and at the intersection of Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway. The Application will also include streetscape improvements along Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue that will enhance the pedestrian experience. The Project's public open space is also proposed to be oriented to

the corner to maximize visibility and is designed to be attractive not only to the residents of the Project but also to other area residents commuting to and from the nearby Metro station.

- *Provide pedestrian connections to the Twinbrook Station project. (Sector Plan, p. 33)*

Through enhanced streetscaping along both Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway, the Project will improve pedestrian connections throughout the area and provide direct connections to the Twinbrook Station project.

- *Building heights should be compatible with adjacent redevelopment in the City of Rockville. (Sector Plan, p. 33)*

As noted above, the Property is located to the immediate northeast of the Alaire mixed-use project and to the north of Fishers Lane from the Terano multi-family project. Both of these projects are part of the Twinbrook Station project and have building heights compatible with the proposed development. In addition, the proposed building's average grade is approximately 8 feet lower than the adjacent properties to the south and west. The office buildings across both streets are assumed to have higher floor to floors compared to residential projects, and the mixed-used buildings to the south and west along Fishers Lane and Higgins Place are either built with taller ground floors due to the retail or taller top stories due to loft levels with pitched roofs.

- *Provide opportunities for housing. The Plan encourages a range of new housing near Metro and jobs, improving the balance of jobs and housing in the I-270 Corridor and enhancing the 1992 Plan's housing recommendations. The Plan recommends housing in the Metro Core area, building on the emerging Twinbrook Station neighborhood. (Sector Plan, p. 2)*

The Application will allow for a range of housing options that help to build on the adjacent Twinbrook Station project. The inclusion of market-rate dwelling units, MPDUs and WFHUs will result in a diverse range of housing at this transit-oriented location.

- *Encourage high quality design features. The Plan's recommendations will provide an upgraded public environment by incorporating parks, streetscaping, public open spaces, connections, and the natural environment into redevelopment that will serve future employees and residents. (Sector Plan, p. 2)*



The proposed open space at the corner of Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway will integrate many features to be utilized both by the public and proposed residents. It will be situated such that the ground level of the proposed building will be surrounding the open space, with the main building lobby and amenities having direct access to the open space. This open space is envisioned to be highly active and become a stopping point for pedestrians and cyclists navigating neighboring streets. The open space will also be integrated as part of the corner expression of the building. A layering of texture in the paving and plantings, along with unique seating options and an artwork focal point will make this space unique and will encourage users to linger and socialize.

- *Create and enhance pedestrian and bike routes that connect to parks and the Metro station.* (Sector Plan, p. 3)

The Application proposes upgrades to both the Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue streetscapes that will allow for safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle circulation to and from the nearby Twinbrook Metro Station. A shared pedestrian and bike path will be provided along Twinbrook Parkway, and existing bike lanes are located within Ardennes Avenue.

- *Reduce automobile dependence by encouraging increased pedestrian activity and transit accessibility.* (Sector Plan, p. 3)

The Site Plan proposes approximately 203 dwelling units in close proximity to transit, which will help encourage transit ridership. Additionally, the Site Plan is designed to provide less than the maximum number of vehicle parking spaces and will provide approximately 100 on-site bicycle parking spaces to help encourage alternatives to automobile travel. The Application will also implement pedestrian-friendly streetscapes on Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue that will encourage and accommodate access to the nearby Twinbrook Metro Station.

- *Twinbrook Parkway. Features should include buildings sited to frame public space and to allow for sidewalks on both sides of the street and using reflective paving materials if possible.* (Sector Plan, p. 20)

The Project will provide a new sidewalk along its Twinbrook Parkway frontage. The improvements to Twinbrook Parkway will not only be the proposed tree boxes and sidewalk improvements, but the building itself is also angled back to provide better site lines around the sharp

existing intersection condition. Pedestrians will be able to enjoy the improved sidewalk along Twinbrook Parkway and can choose to either navigate through the proposed open space at the intersection or continue along into the new proposed sidewalk along Ardennes Avenue.

- *Encourage shared and structured parking rather than surface lots and explore the feasibility of a parking lot district. (Sector Plan, p. 24)*

The Application proposes to replace an underutilized office building and surface parking lot with multi-family housing (including MPDUs and WFHUs) and structured parking, advancing this objective.

- *Support a reduction of parking spaces as outlined in the TMX-2 Zone and encourage the use of parking credits, waivers, and reductions in Section 59-E of the Zoning Ordinance to support a further reduction of parking spaces. (Sector Plan, p. 24)*

Although this provision of the Sector Plan references the prior zoning of the Property and previous Zoning Ordinance, the Site Plan does achieve the stated objective by proposing less than the maximum amount of spaces permitted under the CR Zone (which zone already has reduced parking requirements compared to the previous zone and Zoning Ordinance).

- *Locate parking garages in a way that does not interrupt pedestrian scale street activity and that limits auto travel through pedestrian areas. (Sector Plan, p. 24)*

Vehicular access to the structured parking garage is proposed through an existing curb-cut along the Property's Ardennes Avenue frontage. Vehicular access is consolidated with the proposed loading bay to allow for an uninterrupted and continuous pedestrian through zone along the rest of the Property's frontage on Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway.

- *Incorporate landscaped open spaces into commercial and residential redevelopment that may be private, but are open for public enjoyment. (Sector Plan, p. 24)*

The proposed public open space will be attractively landscaped to encourage residents and the public to enjoy it as a meeting space, rest stops for a bike ride, or for people watching.

- *Street trees should be spaced and sized to create 30 percent canopy coverage on redeveloped areas, and open spaces should be planted and substantially pervious.* (Sector Plan, p. 28)

As noted above, street trees are being provided in a regular pattern following the applicable standards to provide canopy cover. Other outdoor areas are also planted to provide additional green and canopy cover.

- *Establish building heights, but no higher than those at Twinbrook Station, with 10 to 12 stories, or a maximum of 143 feet, near the Metro Station, stepping down to approximately 60 feet, or four to five stories, next to the residential communities along Ardennes Avenue and Halpine Road.* (Sector Plan, p. 30)

The Project's proposed building height of up to 100 feet is appropriate given the Property's immediate adjacency to the Twinbrook Station project, which has comparable building heights. Further to the southwest of the Property, building heights of up to 170 feet are approved for the Twinbrook Station project.

- *Building heights may be increased to accommodate a permitted density bonus for moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and workforce housing.* (Sector Plan, p. 30)

While the Sector Plan recommends increased building heights to accommodate a permitted density bonus, the Site Plan proposes a residential density bonus (32% on the basis of providing 15% MPDUs and WFHUs) that can still be accommodated in a building well below the permitted height for the Property.

- *Locate buildings close to the street with parking in the rear or center of the blocks.* (Sector Plan, p. 31)

The Application proposes to locate both ground-level multi-family dwelling units as well as a residential lobby and amenity area close to Ardennes Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway. The structured parking garage is located to the center of the block and wrapped by the residential uses along the street frontages in accordance with the Sector Plan vision.

- i. *will be served by adequate public services and facilities including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads, storm drainage, and other public facilities. If an approved adequate public facilities test is currently valid and the*

*impact of the development is equal to or less than what was approved, a new adequate public facilities test is not required. If an adequate public facilities test is required the Planning Board must find that the proposed development will be served by adequate public services and facilities, including schools, police and fire protection, water, sanitary sewer, public roads and storm drainage.*

Because no preliminary plan is required for the Property, the adequacy of public facilities will be tested as part of this Site Plan Application. As more fully described in the Traffic Study included with the Application, the Project will be served by adequate transportation facilities.

Other available public facilities and services are also adequate to serve the proposed Site Plan. With regard to schools, the Property is situated in the Richard Montgomery School Cluster. Pursuant to the FY20 Annual School Test, the Richard Montgomery Cluster, as well as the individual school test for Twinbrook Elementary School and Julius West Middle School, are adequate under applicable capacity criterion. Police stations, firehouses, and health clinics are considered adequate under the 2016-2020 Subdivision Staging Policy unless there is evidence that a local area problem will be generated. There are no circumstances present that would rebut this presumption of adequacy.

The Property is served by public water and sewer and is assigned WSSC categories W-1 and S-1. The existing water and sewer lines along the Project's frontage will be adequate to serve the additional development proposed by the Project. Additional down-stream sewer improvements are required, and will be provided in coordination with the City of Rockville and other development within this sewer drainage area. Dry utilities including electricity, gas, and telephone are also available to the Property.

- j. on a property in a Rural Residential or Residential zone, is compatible with the character of the residential neighborhood; and*

The Property is located in the CR zone. Therefore, this section is inapplicable to the Project.

- k. on a property in all other zones, is compatible with existing and approved or pending adjacent development.*

As more fully described above, the proposed building has been carefully designed and situated on the Property to be compatible and in scale with the existing and future surrounding uses. The Project will also provide different housing opportunities for a range of demographics and incomes through the inclusion of market-rate, MPDU and WFHU residential units in a variety of unit types (studios, one-,

and two-bedrooms). As described above, the proposed building height of up to 100 feet will be compatible with the adjacent buildings in the Sector Plan's Metro Core Area, as well as the Twinbrook Station project to the south of the Property.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Planning Board grant approval of the Site Plan Application, thereby allowing the construction of this pedestrian-friendly, optional method development Project with substantial affordable housing in the CR Zone to proceed. The Project satisfies all of the findings that the Planning Board must make in approving the Site Plan under the Zoning Ordinance, as described above. The Project's redevelopment of an underutilized commercial building and surface parking lot with market-rate dwelling units, 15% MPDUs and WFHUs will provide a range of housing options in close proximity to Metro and will activate the street level and enhance the walkability of the Metro Core Area.

Respectfully submitted,

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