

**1300 East Gude Drive
Statement of Justification
Site Plan Application (Level 2)**

I. Property Description

On behalf of the Applicant, BP Associates, LP, an affiliate of Promark Development, this statement of justification is submitted in connection with a Level 2 Site Plan application to accommodate a renovation of the existing East Gude Drive shopping center to include the construction of a self-storage facility on the property located at 1300 East Gude Drive (the "Property"). The Property contains 5.92 acres of land area known as Lot 12, Block B and is zoned Mixed-Use Employment ("MXE"). The Property is currently improved with 85,968 square feet devoted to a variety of light/service industrial uses, mom and pop retail stores and restaurant uses. The Property is surrounded primarily by industrial zoned properties with the sites to the east, west and south located in the City and zoned IL (light industrial) and the site to the north located in the County and zoned IH (heavy industrial).

One of the three parcels comprising the Property was annexed into the City in 2011, pursuant to ANX2011-00140. At the time of annexation, the parcel was zoned I-2 (the County's predecessor zone to IH, heavy industrial). The other two parcels associated with the Property had previously been annexed into the City and were zoned I-L. Given the existing industrial and commercial retail uses on the Property, there was no "ideal" zoning classification to capture the actual operations and functionality of the Property. As a result, it was determined that in connection with the annexation the Property would be rezoned MXE, which was the only zone available that would accommodate all of the existing uses. The Property is a lone MXE zoned parcel located in the industrial zoned area of the City and adjacent to many of the County's industrial uses.

II. Proposed Project

The majority of the Property will remain unchanged by the Site Plan. In general, the Site Plan application involves three changes to the Property, as follows: 1) Enhancements to the existing facade of the shopping center including increasing the retail height by up to 18 feet to provide for a more visible retail presence; 2) reconfiguration of the existing drive-through pad site to accommodate a new drive-through use; and 3) elimination of 32,408 square feet of retail space and construction of 95,281 square feet of self storage space (approximately 900 units) to be located behind the existing retail strip facing East Gude Drive (collectively the "Project"). The self storage facility itself will be a total of five stories (the first level will be partially below grade, with the existing structure in this location being reused), with a maximum height of 50 feet. As a result of the Property's grades and the placement of the self storage behind the existing retail stores, only three levels of the self storage building will be visible from East Gude Drive. The Property will

provide a total of 297 parking spaces and pursuant to the shared-use parking requirements, 283 spaces are required.

More specifically in terms of the enhancements to the existing facade, the Applicant proposes to demolish the existing covered drive-through located approximately at the mid-point of the shopping center. Its removal will create two distinct buildings, referred to as Existing Retail 1 and Existing Retail 2. Façade enhancements to the newly created end caps will be made to complement the rest of the center. As discussed in more detail below, a new entrance from East Gude Drive to the parking lot is proposed which will align with the existing driveway between the two buildings. The driveway will be 18 feet in width one-way eastbound and will include a 5 foot sidewalk. The intent of these changes is to improve the overall circulation internal to the Property. Removing the existing cover of the drive aisle will make the drive aisle and overall circulation on the Property more apparent and facilitate access from the front of the shopping center to the uses located within the interior of the Property. The existing pad site located north of the Existing Retail 1 building will remain, but minor reconfiguration to the surrounding site area is proposed to lengthen the drive-through queuing lane.

The proposed self-storage facility will contain approximately 900 units that will be accessed from internal corridors. Along the rear of the self-storage building two loading bays will be provided to facilitate vehicle loading when needed. On each side of the main loading bays, approximately 10 ground floor storage units will have direct access to the outside via roll up doors. A ground floor office will be located on the lower level in the North corner of the facility.

In regard to the operation of the self-storage facility, the building entrances will have controlled access for guests with leased units. The facility will provide 24-hour access for its customers, and at least one employee will be on-site during normal business hours (approximately 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.).

The Applicant proposes a new entrance along the East Gude Drive frontage of the Property. Currently there are only two access points to the Project - one in the most southern corner of the Property off of East Gude Drive and the second along the Southlawn Lane frontage of the Property. The proposed new right-in/right-out entrance will be located 500 feet from the East Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane intersection and 240 feet from the existing entrance. The queuing analysis conducted by Gorove/Slade Associates indicates that the new entrance will not interfere with the operation of this intersection. The new entrance will align with the drive aisle located between the Existing Retail 1 and 2 buildings and will facilitate circulation from East Gude Drive through the Property to both the parking and other uses located on the Property behind the existing retail buildings, by providing a direct alignment.

Slightly more than 20 percent (51,873 square feet) of the site will remain devoted to open space, consistent with the MXE Zone requirement of 20 percent (or 51,662 square feet). In terms of the required public use space, the Project will continue to provide 5 percent public use space (or 12,952 square feet). With respect to landscaping, 20 trees will be planted to meet the Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance requirements. Further, plantings will be incorporated into the bioretention system as discussed in more detail below.

Signage will be provided in accordance with Article 18 of the Zoning Ordinance.

IV. Civil Engineering

A Natural Resources Inventory was approved by the City of Rockville on February 7, 2018. A Preliminary Forest Conservation Plan is proposed to cover an area equal to approximately 15 percent (or 7,600 square feet) of the equivalent work area, consistent with the 15 percent required. This will be accomplished through planting of 19 trees. Three replacement trees will also be planted to mitigate the loss of three specimen trees on the site.

Stormwater management will be addressed by two new micro-bioretenion facilities located adjacent to existing parking and the reconfigured drive-thru lane. These facilities will be landscaped with trees, groundcovers and shrubs to provide additional Stormwater benefits as well as enhanced aesthetics.

Public water and sewer service are currently provided by WSSC and electric service is provided by PEPCO. There is adequate capacity to accommodate the proposed development.

V. Compliance with the Mixed Use Employment Zone Development Standards

The density of development in the MXE Zone is determined by compliance with the various development standards set forth in Section 25.13.05, the additional design guidelines of Section 25.13.06, and the special design regulations of Section 25.13.07 for mixed use zones. The Project complies with the applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, as described below.

A. Section 25.13.05 – Development Standards

1. Subsection 25.13.05a – Build to Line

Not Applicable.

2. Subsection 25.13.05b – Development Standards

a. Subsection 25.13.05b(1)

The Project complies with the applicable development standards for the MXE Zone set forth in Section 25.13.05.b:

	Required/Permitted	Proposed
Maximum Height (in feet)	120'	50'
Total Open Area Required	20%	20%

	Required/Permitted	Proposed
Public Use Space Required w/in Open Area	5%	5%
Setbacks Abutting Public Right-of-Way	None	80' (Existing to Remain)
Side Setback Abutting Residential	25' or ½ height of building, whichever is greater	N/A
Side Setback Abutting Non-Residential Land	None; 10' min. if provided	13' (Existing)
Rear Setback Abutting Residential	25' or ½ height of building, whichever is greater	N/A
Rear Setback Abutting Non-Residential Land	None; 10' min. if provided	140'

b. Subsection 25.13.05b(2)

Based on the surrounding uses, the layback slope requirements set forth in subsection (d) are not applicable.

3. *Subsection 25.13.05c – Other Standards and Requirements for New Development*

Summary of Requirement	Proposed
Conversion of Space – commercial space is encouraged to be designed to allow for conversion to residential space [Section 25.13.05.c.1]	Not feasible, given the self-storage use of the building
Entryways – Requirements pertaining to residential buildings [Section 25.13.05.c.2]	N/A – Building is commercial

Summary of Requirement	Proposed
Access areas of a building intended for non-residential uses must not have any access to areas of the building used for residential purposes [Section 25.13.05c.3]	N/A – No residential provided
MPDUs – Residential development must comply with MPDU requirements [Section 25.13.05c.4]	N/A – No residential provided
Public Use Space – must be provided consistent with Section 25.17.01 [Section 25.13.c.5]	5%
Floor Area Limitation – 65,000 square feet limitation on retail tenant space on ground floor	N/A – No new retail provided; all existing retail is less than 65,000 square feet

B. Section 25.13.06 – Additional Design Guidelines

	Summary of Requirement	Proposed
<u>Aesthetic and Visual Characteristics for All Zones</u>		
Facades and Exterior Walls Including Sides & Backs [Section 25.13.06.b.1]	Avoid massive scale and uniform and impersonal appearance. Building walls greater than 100 feet should include projections, recessions and other treatments.	Architectural embellishments have been included on all sides of the proposed addition. Existing retail already has architectural embellishments but those will be enhanced.
	Occupy at least 60 percent of street frontage with windows, arcades and awnings. Architectural treatment similar to front façade must be provided to the sides and rear.	On retail level more than 60% of the linear frontage is storefront windows. For the proposed self-storage addition, we are including window openings on the upper floor along the street frontage.

	Summary of Requirement	Proposed
	Provide architectural features that contribute to the visual interest at the pedestrian scale.	Both the retail and storage facility entry area will have architectural features that contribute to the visual interest at the pedestrian level.
Roofs [Section 25.13.06.b.2]	Provide variations in rooflines. Roof features should complement the architectural and visual character of adjoining neighborhoods.	The roofline of the retail building will have a variety of architectural roof line heights with the various features. The entry for the self-storage facility will likewise have a raised architectural feature to highlight the entry. Both will complement and enhance the character of the adjoining neighborhood.
Materials & Colors [Section 25.13.06.b.3]	Utilize building materials and colors compatible with those in adjoining neighborhoods.	Adjoining neighborhood is comprised of various industrial uses. The building will include EIFS, metal roofing panels, fiber cement board architectural panels which will enhance the architectural appearance of our building and be compatible with the materials found in the adjoining neighborhood.
Items Allowed Not Facing A Public Street [Section 25.13.06.b.4]	The following items are allowed either on sides not facing a public street or in the rear yard: (a) window and wall air conditioners; (b) electric utility meters; (c) air conditioning compressors; and (d) irrigation and pool pumps.	The building design complies with the requirements. Mechanical systems will be located on the roof.
Entryways [Section 25.13.06.b.5]	Provide highly visible entryways.	Entrance to the self storage facility will be located on the west façade and will include a fenestration covered entry feature, making this highly visible.

	Summary of Requirement	Proposed
Screening of Mechanical Equipment [Section 25.13.06.b.6]	Screen mechanical equipment to mitigate noise and views.	Mechanical units will be placed on the roof. These can be screened as necessary.
<u>Site Design and Relationship to Surrounding Community</u>		
Vehicular Access [Section 23.13.06.c.1]	Provide safety and protection to adjacent residential uses	N/A
Buffers [Section 25.13.06.c.2]	Provide visual and noise buffers to adjacent residential uses	N/A
Outdoor Sales and Storage [Section 25.13.06.c.3]	Certain restrictions imposed outdoor sales	N/A
Trash recycling, screening [Section 25.13.06.c.4.b.]	Trash recycling outside of building must be secured and screened	Trash enclosure for the self storage facility and the retail stores are currently located in the rear of the center along the East end of the site and will remain in this location.
Parking Lots [Section 25.13.06.c.5.a.]	Provide safe, convenient and efficient access. Use landscaping to define parking areas	Project provides safe and efficient access to parking, storage and loading. The daylighting of the drive aisle will improve access to parking behind the building.
Pedestrian and Bicycle Flows [Section 25.13.06.c.6.]	Provide for pedestrian accessibility; sidewalk leading to ROW encouraged; provide sidewalks along length of building adjoining parking lot.	Sidewalks currently exist along the length of the retail center allowing convenient access from the parking lot to the retail stores. Sidewalks will be provided leading from the rear parking to the entrance to the self storage entry.

	Summary of Requirement	Proposed
Central Features and Community Spaces [Section 25.13.06.c.7.]	Pedestrian scale features, private inviting entrances and parking lot locations. Special design features should define circulation paths and outdoor spaces	The front sidewalk with the covered canopy provides visitors with a protected and inviting entrance to the retail shops. The connection between the retail shops and the lower level entry to the self storage facility is landscaped to provide a shaded, and inviting circulation path from the upper to the lower level of the site.
Delivery and Loading Spaces, Hours of Operation [Section 25.13.06.c.8.]	Design in accordance with Article 16;	Loading areas for the self storage facility will be provided along the rear of the center in a central location. The retail center has existing loading areas to the rear of the center with access via the breezeway between the retail buildings.
Noise Abatement [Section 25.13.06.c.10.]	Use must comply with noise regulations;	Project will comply with noise restrictions
Outdoor lighting [Section 25.13.06.c.11.]	Provide in accordance with the landscape, screening and lighting manual	Satisfied. Will provide architectural lighting to enhance the architecture in addition to existing lighting.
Landscaping [Section 25.13.06.c.12.]	Provide in accordance with the landscape, screening and lighting manual	Aside from Forest & Tree Preservation Ordinance requirements, no new landscaping, screening or lighting is proposed.

C. 25.13.07c - Special Design Regulations for MXE Zone

Section	Summary	Proposed
Building Location [Section 25.13.07c.1]	When recommended in the Plan, buildings should be located close to the front property line or at the build-to line.	N/A
Uses by Floor [Section 25.13.07c.2]	Ground floor may contain retail and other uses along major pedestrian spines.	The existing retail will remain.
Façade [Section 25.13.07c.3]	Buildings should provide expression line above first floor and a defined cornice at the top of the façade wall.	The retail center will have architectural materials to accent the features and sign band areas. Likewise the self storage facility will include architectural elements to help accent and highlight the building façade and cornice line.
Sidewalks	Where sidewalks required, must be in accordance with Article 17.	New sidewalks are consistent with Article 17, however the sidewalk width is reduced by 1 foot due to space constraints.
Parking	Comply with Article 16. Most parking should be located to the side or rear of the buildings.	283 spaces required and 313 spaces provided.

VIII. Findings

The Project satisfies the required Site Plan findings set forth in Section 25.07.01 of the Zoning Ordinance in that:

- A. The Project will not adversely affect the health or safety of persons residing or working in the neighborhood of the proposed development

The proposed development will improve the Property operationally, environmentally and aesthetically. The Site Plan will improve the operation of the existing shopping center by replacing 32,408 square feet of the existing shopping center which is currently devoted to a night club with a self storage facility which will generate less traffic than the night club use and will also require less parking. Moreover, the location of the Property, surrounded by industrial uses, is an ideal location for a self-storage facility. The overall traffic generation for the shopping center will decrease dramatically – by 20 trips in the AM, 107 trips in the PM and 116 trips on Saturdays. The building will be constructed in accordance with the City’s Green Building Code, and thus there will be no adverse environmental effects. In addition, stormwater management facilities in the way of micro-bioretenion will be provided to accommodate the new structure and the applicant will be adding 22 new trees to the Property. The proposed new entrance on East Gude Drive will help improve on-site circulation.

B. The Project will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property or improvements in the neighborhood

The Project will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the neighborhood. The Project will improve the aesthetics and operation of the Property and provide a needed use. The Property is well located in an industrial area surrounded by such uses as a concrete plant, gas stations, a moving company, and a paper recycling plant. There is limited physical activity associated with the proposed self-storage facility which is surrounded by light and heavy industrial uses.

C. The Project will not overburden existing and programmed public facilities as set forth in Article 20 of this Chapter and as provided in the adopted Adequate Public Facilities Standards

The Property will reduce the number of AM, PM and Saturday trips by 20, 107 and 116, respectively, as discussed in the On-Site Transportation Review report included with this application. The Property is served by the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department located at 380 Hungerford Drive and by the City of Rockville police station located at 2 West Montgomery Avenue. The Project will not overburden the public facilities.

D. The Project will not adversely affect the natural resources or environment of the City or surrounding areas

The Project will not adversely affect the natural resources or environment of the City or the surrounding areas. In fact, the Project will have a positive effect on the surrounding area by reducing trips, providing additional storm water management and increasing the number of trees on the Property. The Project is providing forest conservation credit with the planting of 19 trees and will be mitigating the loss of three specimen trees.

E. The Project will not be in conflict with the Plan

The Property is located within Planning Area 16, Southlawn/Redgate. The 2002 City of Rockville comprehensive Master Plan recognizes that service industrial uses are concentrated in this area. The Master Plan includes several recommendations addressing the proximity of the

industrial and residential uses in the Lincoln Park and Maryvale neighborhoods, located on the south/southwest side of East Gude Avenue, away from the Property.

F. The Project will not constitute a violation of any provision of this Chapter or other applicable law

The Project complies with the provisions and laws of Rockville governing the development of the Property. As previously detailed, the Project complies with all of the MXE development standards. The Project will comply with the City's Green Building Standards by minimizing the development's impact on the environment and meeting the new 2015 International Green Construction Code. The Project will also comply with the City's Art in Private Development Ordinance.

G. The Project will not be incompatible with the surrounding uses or property

The Project will not be incompatible with the surrounding uses. The Property is surrounded almost entirely by light or heavy industrial use, with the exception of a veterinarian clinic to the southeast and a multi-family townhouse residence across East Gude Drive, southwest of the Property. Importantly, given the location of the self-storage facility, it will be only minimally visible from those two locations. In addition, there will be overall improvements made to the appearance of the Property. The additional construction on the rear of the Existing Retail 1 building will provide visual interest to the building and improve its presence when viewed from East Gude Drive.

The self-storage use is compatible with the surrounding uses. As previously noted, there is very little activity associated with the use and it will not in any way negatively affect the surrounding area.

IX. Community Outreach

In accordance with the City's requirements, the Applicant held a Pre-Application Meeting ("PAM") on January 11, 2018. Four community members attended. The development team presented the Project to the attendees and answered questions, which focused primarily on the changes to the shopping center, the relocation of the existing retail stores, and the operational aspects of the self-storage facility. The meeting minutes are included as part of this application.

X. Conclusion

The proposed Site Plan improves the existing shopping center by adding a needed use which generates less traffic and less parking than the existing use, improves the elevations of the existing retail uses facing East Gude Drive and improves the circulation of the drive-through use. For the reasons out-lined above, we respectfully request that the Planning Commission grant approval.