

McLean Citizens Association



The Voice of McLean for Over 100 Years

McLean Citizens Association Resolution
Application by the B.F. Saul Company to Amend a Special Exception
SEA 99-P-034
Date May 6, 2022

Whereas, the B.F. Saul Company (the “Applicant”) has filed an application (the “Application”) to amend a special exception for its Tysons Park Place I (“Park Place I”) and Tysons Park Place II (“Park Place II”) properties (the “site”), located at 7926 and 7930 Jones Branch Drive (Tax Map Nos. 29-4 ((7)) 5C and -5B), respectively;

Whereas, the existing special exception, approved March 13, 2000, permitted additional building height to allow Park Place II to be constructed to a height up to 150 feet;

Whereas, at present, the 8.06-acre combined site (including credit for previously dedicated land) is developed with the 147-foot Park Place II office building, constructed in 2008 and occupied by Hilton Worldwide global headquarters, the 135.5-foot Park Place I office building, and a shared parking deck;

Whereas, the Applicant seeks to raze the extant and vacant Park Place I office building, which was constructed in 1975, and construct in its place a new 12-story office building, with ground-floor retail, while retaining the existing shared parking structure;

Whereas, the site is currently zoned C-4, within which the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance (“Zoning Ordinance”) allows a by-right floor-area ratio (“FAR”) of 1.65;

Whereas, the existing Park Place II building (311,600 square feet) and the proposed Park Place I building (267,633 square feet) would total 579,233 square feet of total building area on a site area of 351,047 square feet, yielding a 1.65 FAR;

Whereas, the Zoning Ordinance allows a maximum building height of 120 feet in the C-4 zoning district and Applicant seeks approval for a building height for Park Place II of up to 175 feet;

Whereas, the Zoning Ordinance allows for an increase in building height above the maximum height in the C-4 District (§ 5100(2)(C)(8)(a)(1)) pursuant to approval of a special exception provided, in part, that ((§ 5100(2)(C)(8)(b)):

- The increase will be in harmony with the height recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan; and
- The resultant height will not be detrimental to the character and development of adjacent lands;

Whereas, the Tysons Corner Urban Center Comprehensive Plan (the “Comprehensive Plan”) places (p. 127) the site in Tier 3, with a maximum recommended building height of 175 feet, a height which corresponds with that requested by the Applicant;

Whereas, more generally, the Comprehensive Plan provides height-related guidance (at pp. 121-122 and pp.126-128) including that buildings: “should be designed with height variations,” as is being proposed; should be “spaced from one another,” as is being proposed; should focus massing “towards the wider rights-of-way,” as is being proposed; and, should “respond to context,” as is being proposed;

Whereas, the site already includes one building with 147 feet of height, lies between two gateway buildings (p. 127), and faces numerous constructed and approved buildings above 175 feet in height across the Capital Beltway;

Whereas, the McLean Citizens Association finds that the requested building height is harmonious with the height provisions of the Comprehensive Plan, and will not be detrimental to its neighbors, and, therefore, qualifies under the Zoning Ordinance for special exception for an increase in building height; and

Whereas, the Applicant seeks a waiver Zoning Ordinance § 2103(4)(B), to allow for reduction of front yard setbacks required in the C-4 district from 54 to 41 feet;

Whereas, this waiver will allow the proposal to better conform to Comprehensive Plan recommendations for street activation and was occasioned by a staff request;

Whereas, the Applicant seeks a modification of Zoning Ordinance § 6103(3) to allow a reduction in required loading spaces to three, which Applicant suggests will sufficiently sustain building operations;

Whereas, the Applicant seeks a waiver of § 8100(7)(E)(3)(b), which requires interparcel access, as Applicant sees no purpose served by its provision, neighboring parcels enjoy sufficient access and street frontage, and there are no proposed streets on site in the Comprehensive Plan;

Whereas, the Applicant seeks a waiver of Zoning Ordinance § 8100(7)(E)(4), requiring further road dedication, due to its inapplicability, as the Comprehensive Plan does not contemplate widening Jones Branch Drive, and Applicant is implementing a new bicycle lane;

Whereas, the Applicant seeks a waiver of Zoning Ordinance § 8100(7)(E)(7), so that parking control signage can be determined at final site plan;

Whereas, the Zoning Ordinance (§ 4102 (1)(F)(2)(a)) requires that special exceptions conform to the Comprehensive Plan overall;

Whereas, the Comprehensive Plan calls for a mix of uses, and the Application proposes retail and service uses to complement the predominant office use;

Whereas, the Comprehensive Plan encourages green building, and the Application proposes to construct a LEED Silver building;

Whereas, the Comprehensive Plan recommends one inch of stormwater retention for proposals seeking “a significant increase in density/intensity” (p. 81), and, while this is inapplicable to the Application, nevertheless, Applicant proposes to implement measures to retain 0.7 inches of rainfall, thereby doubling the current retention performance;

Whereas, in response to transportation recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan, Applicant proposes to: reconfigure the site’s frontage along Jones Branch Drive to accommodate a new bicycle lane; accommodate on-street parking; voluntarily implement TDM measures; and relocate adjacent to the sidewalk a Capital BikeShare station and add a repair station;

Whereas, the Comprehensive Plan (p. 92) calls for 1 acre of public park per 10,000 employees, and the County typically uses a standard of 300 square feet of office space per employee;

Whereas, the 267,633 square feet of the proposed Park Place I would therefore generate a need for 3,920 square feet of public park space, and the Application proposes 4,000 square feet;

Whereas, this public space will include an additional row of trees behind the sidewalk and be configured as a series of variously furnished ‘rooms’ that transition into the additional 27,220 square feet of private open space being provided by the Applicant;

Whereas, the Application fulfills the relevant Urban Design recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan;

Whereas, most broadly, the Zoning Ordinance (§ 4102 (1)(F)(2)) requires that any and all special exceptions shall comply with the following standards:

- the proposed use is harmonious with the Comprehensive Plan;
- the proposed use is harmonious with the purpose and intent of the zoning district;
- the proposed use must not adversely affect the use or future development of neighboring properties;
- the proposed use’s associated multimodal traffic must not endanger or conflict with existing and expected neighborhood traffic; and
- the site must be supplied with sufficient utilities to service the proposed use;

Whereas, the McLean Citizens Association finds these standards for approval of a special exception to have been satisfied; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the McLean Citizens Association supports SEA 99-P-034 and the Applicant’s requested waivers and modifications to requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Approved by the MCA Board of Directors

Date: _____, 2021.

McLean Citizens Association, P.O. Box 273, McLean Virginia 22101

Cc: Dahlia Palchik, Providence District Supervisor
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