RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO MIXED-USE TOWN CENTER

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION FOR A FIRST-STAGE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT

A & R Development Corporation and Mid-City Urban LLC, Applicants

September 24, 2004

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 04-24
EXHIBIT NO. 5

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APPLICATION BY MID-CITY URBAN LLC AND A. & R. DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT FOR A NEW MIXED-USE TOWN CENTER AT RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRORAIL STATION

September 24, 2004

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

This Application to the District of Columbia Zoning Commission requests approval of the first stage of a two-stage planned unit development ("PUD") and a zoning map amendment for a 7.33-acre site located immediately to the east of the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail station in Northeast Washington. This location is in Ward 5 and within the area of Advisory Neighborhood Commission ("ANC") 5B. The proposed development will be a transit-oriented, mixed-use town center, and predominantly four to five stories in height. The design provides for retail stores on the ground floors oriented along a Main Street with apartments above and in separate buildings. Retail parking will be provided curbside along Main Street, andadditional parking will be provided in two garages: one serving the residential apartments; and another serving retail as well as residential uses. Immediately to the south of the mixed-use PUD, the Applicant will construct another parking garage for WMATA to replace the parking for Metrorail customers that currently occupies the PUD site.

A. The Applicant

The Applicant is a partnership between Mid-City Urban LLC, with offices in Silver Spring, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Greensboro, North Carolina, and A& R Development Corporation, with offices in the District of Columbia and Baltimore, Maryland.

Over the past five years, ***Mid-City Urban LLC*** has become one of the foremost national developers of mixed-income and mixed-use urban communities. Specializing primarily in large-scale projects in the eastern United States, Mid-City Urban brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the development of complex urban developments.

The company established itself first in the field of market-rate and affordable multi-family housing, both rehabilitation and new construction, having produced more than 20,000 dwelling units. Mid-City Urban continues to develop affordable housing,

utilizing a wide range of federal housing finance and development programs – public housing privatization, Section 8 Mark to Market program, the Low Income Credit Program, and a variety of state housing preservation programs.

In the area of transit-oriented development, Mid-City Urban is part of the team redeveloping the site surrounding the Silver Spring Metrorail station, the core of a massive town center project. Mid-City Urban is also involved in the development of the shopping center of "big box"retail stores on the site immediately to the east of the PUD site, including to date, a Home Depot and large Giant Food supermarket.

Founded in 1977, ***A&R Development Corporation*** specializes in urban design and development of residential housing with substantial experience building affordable neighborhoods using the federal HOPE VI program. The firm's extensive portfolio includes all levels of rental and homeownership units, elderly housing, garden and high-rise facilities, townhouses and student living facilities. Since its inception, A&R has completed more than 4,300 housing units and over 400,000 square feet of retail and commercial development valued at over $750 million. The firm is 100 percent minority owned, and its principal, Mr. Theo Rodgers, is well respected in Baltimore and Washington, D.C. political and financial circles.

A & R recently completed work on Wheeler Creek Estates, a 314-unit mixed-income housing development in the Washington Highlands neighborhood and funded by a $54 million HOPE VI grant. Heritage Crossing is a recently completed Baltimore Hope VI project consisting of 260 townhouses, a community center, and a daycare center. Currently the firm is working on a $155 million, 762-unit HOPE VI ($30.8M) redevelopment of 40 acres east of the Anacostia River in Washington, D.C. This "gareway" development includes a 151-unit senior building to be completed by the end of 2004, a community center, 226 units of rental and for-sale low-rise housing, roughly 300 units of rental and for-sale high-rise housing, and a commercial center anchored by a grocery store. A&R was recently awarded $20 million in HOPE VI funds for the development of Eastgate in Southeast Washington, D.C., which currently is in the planning stages. The firm also recently completed is the 151-unit, $17-million Redwood Apartments in Baltimore.

Additionally, the firm built the 151-unit, $17-million Redwood Apartments in Baltimore, and has begun work on the Breco, a 38-unit boutique luxury condominium building adjacent to Baltimore's City Hall.

Other recently-completed or in-progress projects include: Lockwood Place, a $71 million, 250,000 square foot Class A office building; Symphony Centre & Symphony Centre Apartments, which includes two 3-story office buildings and an 8-story, 186-unit apartment building; Morgan View Apartments, a $40-million, 796-bed student housing facility; Bloomsbury Square, an $8.4-million, 51-unit waterfront community built for the State of Maryland; and is just starting Bembe Beach, a 30-40-unit, high-end active adult for-sale community on Chesapeake Bay in Annapolis, Maryland.

B. The Site and the Surrounding Area

The property that is the subject of this application is the existing parking area for the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail station – immediately to the east of the station and fronting on Rhode Island Avenue, N.E. The site has 319,446 square feet of area, or 7.33 acres. The separate lot for the WMATA parking garage will have approximately 62,954 square feet of area, and is outside of the PUD. However, this project is shown as part of the plans because of the clear traffic and parking relationships to the PUD project.

The existing land use pattern in the four quadrants surrounding the intersection of the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail station and Rhode Island Avenue reflect the historical industrial uses and zoning of this area. The area immediately surrounding the station consists of some continuing light industrial uses, vacant industrial structures and land, "heavy" commercial uses such as automotive repair, places of worship and newer retail uses. This core area around the Metro station is in turn surrounded by residential neighborhoods – Brentwood, Brookland, Edgewood and Eckington.[1]

The southeast quadrant, including the subject PUD site, is zoned M (General Industry). For the past 20 odd years the predominant uses have been land-extensive federal and District of Columbia government uses – parking for Metro, asphalt recycling, automobile impoundment lot, drivers' license testing site, salt dome and garbage truck repair facility and parking. The large U.S. Postal Service Distribution Center was constructed several years ago to the south of the subject PUD site.

Significant new private development has occurred in this area, with assistance from and encouragement by the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and the Office of Planning. A 118,000-square-foot Home Depot and a 49,000-square-foot Giant supermarket with a large surface parking area have been developed. The Large Tract Review approval and partial rezoning of this property were designed to allow development of a "big box" retail center on a site of 21.74 acres. Under that plan, one additional large site remains for a third large-format retail use of approximately 100,000 square feet of gross floor area. To the east and southeast of the shopping center is the Brentwood neighborhood, which includes a small area of single-family detached homes, plus larger areas devoted to garden apartments and row dwellings.

The northeast quadrant is dominated by the remaining buildings of a large printing operation, Merkle Press, which left the area some years ago and smaller buildings previously occupied by printing related businesses related to Merkle. Substantial underutilized land exists. Some buildings have been reoccupied by retail, vocational training, office and religious uses. A large 90-foot apartment building is located on Rhode Island Avenue as well. The neighborhood extending to the northeast of this area is Brookland, consisting predominantly of single-family detached houses, plus

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[1] See the "Neighborhood Context Map," attached as *Exhibit A*.

clusters of row dwellings and low-scale apartments, and the neighborhood retail service area along 12th Street.

To the northwest of the Metrorail station, development is anchored by a modest-sized shopping center constructed 10-15 years ago, vacant land, a large church and continuing light industrial uses such as a spring works and a glass and mirror company. Rising above these uses to the immediate north is the large (915-unit) Edgewood Terrance apartment complex of 90-foot apartment buildings and some lower-density buildings. Large warehouses line the west side of the railroad tracks, including one that has been converted to artists' studios. The Edgewood neighborhood is located to the west and north of Edgewood Terrace apartments and is improved predominantly with row dwellings, scattered garden apartments and semi-detached houses.

The southwest quadrant accommodates automobile repair and used car sales, religious uses, vacant industrial structures, vacant land and minor commercial uses. To the southeast the residential neighborhood is Eckington, developed with a combination of row dwellings and small apartment houses.

II. THE PROJECT

A. General Description

The design vision for Rhode Island Avenue Metro is to create a vibrant, mixed-use town center that combines living, work and retail spaces to promote a sense of community within the larger context of the surrounding neighborhoods. The plan features a "New Urbanist" Main Street with smaller scale neighborhood restaurants and shopping, an appealing pedestrian orientation and easy access to rapid transit via Metrorail and bus.

The project team has three goals for the design of Metro Plaza:

1) Create an urban, pedestrian-friendly environment, designed with New Urbanist principles, which would also be accessible by other forms of transportation, including automobiles and public transportation.

2) Provide destination and specialty retail tenants that will attract Metrorail commuters as well as residents of the new community and the surrounding neighborhoods.

3) Provide line-of-sight and pedestrian linkages to the large-scale shopping center adjacent to the east. This will increase pedestrian traffic through Metro Plaza and increase access and patronage to the shopping center without adding vehicular traffic.

More specifically, at Rhode Island Avenue Metro, retail stores, as well as restaurants, cafes and convenience services, will line a Main Street that is approximately

570 feet in length.[2] Three stories of rental apartments will be located over the retail base floors on both sides of the Main Street. On the north side of Main Street a substantial-sized parking garage will negotiate the steep slope down to Rhode Island Avenue, where the street wall will consist of residential facades similar to those on Main Street. This will create a completely new urban image along this section of Rhode Island Avenue, in contrast with the bare bluff that exists at present. At the east end of the long row of residential facades, several buildings on Rhode Island Avenue will be actual five-story apartment buildings of similar design to those on Main Street.

The parking garage to the north of Main Street will serve the retail uses as well as some of the residences. Another parking garage for the residences will be located adjacent to retail uses on the south side of the project. Parking is provided at approximately a 1:1 ratio for the apartments (272 spaces) and three spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail space (195 spaces).[3] The two garages will accommodate a total of 440 spaces. The PUD site also accommodates 17 Kiss & Ride and three taxi drop-off spaces for Metro, as well as 30 curbside spaces, for a total of 490 parking spaces.

Main Street will be pedestrian and retail oriented. The design plan includes continuous storefronts with large display windows and frequent entrances, ample sidewalks with amenities such as benches, landscaping, and lighting and pavement details, all in a design that recalls the intimate and convenient nature of main streets of the past. A pedestrian cross walk from the site to the adjacent big box retail center is provided near the east end of Main Street. There will be traffic calming features on Main Street and curbside parking for 30 cars.

Residential amenities will include a community room, health room and other support spaces, all sited around and focused on a well-landscaped common space. A swimming pool is also provided. Retail space will total 64,220 square feet, and the project will include a small (10,780 s.f.) amount of office space. The retail uses will include small- and medium-sized stores, cafes, restaurants and convenience services such as dry cleaners. Incubator space for small, start-up businesses is included as an important economic development stimulus and public benefit. On the south side of Main Street, and near the Metrorail entrance, will be a building accommodating the administrative offices for the town center. The total gross floor area for the PUD project, including the two on-site parking garages, is 530,688 square feet, and the floor area ratio ("FAR") is 1.66.

The 272 apartments are projected to include a mix of approximately 127 one-bedroom units, 129 two-bedrooms and 16 three-bedrooms. Twenty percent of the apartments will be affordable to low and moderate income households, including units for households with 50 percent of Metropolitan area median income.

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[2] See the Project Plans attached in *Exhibit C.*

[3] See the "Site Analysis" Chart attached in *Exhibit B.*

The applicant will construct a 200-car parking garage for WMATA to replace the existing surface parking on the PUD site. It will be located on a separate lot immediately to the south of the PUD site and adjacent to the Metrorail station and will be two stories high plus a below-grade level. Automobile and bus traffic destined for the Metro parking garage will follow a "loop" pattern that by-passes Main Street, thereby avoiding conflicts between the two types of vehicular usage. Including the WMATA garage, a total of 690 parking spaces will be provided.

B. Exterior Design

The design of the buildings and massing creates a sense of place similar to other sought-after neighborhoods within the District of Columbia. This was accomplished with a strong building edge and having the buildings sited close to the street. This allows pedestrians, Metrobuses, taxis and automobiles to share the public zone equally. Establishing a traditional street wall will allow for variety, interest and interaction along the street.

All facades will generally be brick. A variety of elevations have been designed to give the impression of several buildings instead of one large structure. This design will provide a sense that the community was built over a period of time, thus adding additional interest to the community. The architectural style is traditional in its character yet still complements the existing warehouse character of the nearby neighborhood. A combination of different pitched roofs, variety of roof heights, diverse window styles and the use of horizontal banning of materials will add variety to the facades of the buildings.

C. Landscape Plan

The landscape architectural design provides a clear relationship to the surrounding community and urban fabric while emphasizing the site plan's internal opportunities. This is first evident as one approaches the site along Rhode Island Avenue. Street trees relating to the greater streetscape of Rhode Island Avenue are animated with a combination of low walls and pedestrian scale plantings.

Internal to the site is a "main street" with a distinctly urban feel. Building facades and parallel parking are softened with street trees that continue the rhythm established along Rhode Island Avenue. A median provides for a third row of parallel parking and introduces a third row of street trees down the center of the street. The terminus of the "main street" is a pedestrian space that integrates with the existing Metro station.

Other components of the landscape architectural design include a street tree lined perimeter drive, semi-public rooftop space with the potential for garden space, and a pool amenity area for residents.

III. EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONING

The PUD site is currently zoned M (General Industry), which permits general industrial uses up to a maximum FAR of 6.0 and a maximum height of 90 feet. New residential uses are prohibited. The existing zoning prohibits residential uses and is therefore not suitable to accommodate a mixed-use town center development as proposed in this PUD application and as encouraged at Metrorail stations by *Comprehensive Plan* policies cited later in this statement. As to the issue of the loss of the existing industrial zoning and the long-term prospects for industrial development in the city, the applicant notes that the existing use for more than 20 years has been surface parking for Metorail users. Also, the *Comprehensive Plan* and other public policies do not favor industrial development immediately adjacent to Metrorail stations, because industrial uses typically have a relatively low ratio of employees or workers to building area and land area. Thus, they are a less than optimal use of vitally important locations next to Metrorail in that they are poor generators of rapid transit ridership. In a location next to a Metrorail station, the truck traffic associated with industry also present traffic conflicts with the high volume of automobiles and buses traveling to and from the site.

The applicant requests a rezoning to C-2-B, a medium-density mixed use zone that allows office, retail, residential and mixed uses to a maximum height of 65 feet and a maximum density of 3.5 FAR as a matter of right. Commercial uses are limited to no more than 1.5 FAR. With a PUD the maximum permitted height is 90 feet and the maximum permitted density is 6.0 FAR for residential or mixed uses, of which no more than 2.0 FAR may be devoted to commercial uses. This height and bulk will readily accommodate the proposed development, as well as the mixture of uses proposed.

As stated previously, the parking garage for WMATA is not part of the PUD. It will be built as a matter of right under the existing M zoning and on a separate lot for purposes of WMATA ownership and operation. The street access to the parking garage is fully coordinated with the circulation for the town center.

IV. TABULATION OF DEVELOPMENT DATA

Subsection 2403.11 of the Zoning Regulations requires a PUD applicant to submit a chart comparing the proposed development with matter-of-right development under existing zoning. Under the existing M zoning, the development would be all commercial or all industrial (residential uses are prohibited), or a combination thereof, up to a maximum height of 90 feet and a maximum density of 6.0 FAR. Thus, total development on the PUD site of 319,446 square feet could achieve a maximum of 1,916,676 square feet of gross floor area devoted to commercial and industrial uses. In recent years, development in the industrial zones in Washington has been primarily office development, so that the result of this development scenario would be a large conglomeration of office space, assuming market demand for the space.

By way of comparison, the development data for the proposed PUD are set forth in the chart on the following page.

Development Data Chart

Total PUD Site Area	319,446 s.f. (7.33 acres)
Required Minimum for PUD (C-2-B)	15,000 s.f.
Gross Floor Area (g.f.a.)	530,688 g.f.a.
Floor Area Ratio	
Proposed	1.66 FAR
Allowed (Residential/Commercial)	6.0/2.0
Building Height	45-55 feet
Permitted – C-2-B with PUD	90 feet
Minimum Lot Width and Lot Area	None prescribed
Lot Occupancy	40 percent
Maximum Permitted (Commercial)	100 percent
Maximum permitted (Residential)	80 percent
Side and Rear Yards - None Required	Ample Setbacks Provided
Parking	490 spaces
Required	178 spaces

V. PUBLIC BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

Section 2403 of the Zoning Regulations sets forth the standards for evaluating and approving a PUD application. Section 2403.9 provides categories of public benefits and project amenities for review by the Zoning Commission. A number of these public benefits and project amenities are exhibited in this proposed residential development, as discussed below. In addition, Section 2403.4 of the PUD regulations states that the proposed PUD shall be "not inconsistent" with the Comprehensive Plan, and § 2403.3 states that any adverse effects on the surrounding area or on public facilities shall be of an acceptable level.. The Applicant believes that the proposed PUD is consistent with and significantly advances a number of the goals and policies stated in the District elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*, D.C. Law 12-275, 10 DCMR (1998), and also exemplifies compliance with the Evaluation Standards, as presented below.

A. Public Benefits and Project Amenities

1. New Mixed-Use Town Center. This project will offer the benefits of a mixed-use, transit-oriented development. First, the uses will reinforce each other in beneficial ways, creating convenience and amenity for the occupants and the public. The retail and service uses will be supported by Metrorail customers and on-site residents and as a result will have more size and diversity to serve residents of the surrounding neighborhoods. Because of these three primary bases of customer support, the retail establishments have a strong basis for economic viability. Additional public benefits are that retail and service establishments tend to hire a high proportion of neighborhood residents (compared to office development, for example) and that retail uses pay a high rate of taxes to the city on a per square foot basis.

The 272 apartments will add to the city's housing supply and population, an important and high-priority goal of Mayor Anthony Williams and the Office of Planning. Twenty percent of the units will be affordable and thus will help meet city's critical need for housing for low- and moderate-income people, another high-priority goal of the District of Columbia government. The on-site residents will help create evening activity on Main Street, thereby improving public safety and helping extend the business hours and economic productivity of the retail uses.

The presence of the retail and service uses on site will help market the apartments. The combined appeal of convenience to rapid transit service and retail and convenience services and restaurants is expected to be strong. The small office component will add to the daytime population and purchasing power on site.

Ample but unobtrusive parking is provided, including: a parking garage for WMATA to replace the parking spaces currently on the PUD site; a parking garage for

residents; a parking garage for residents and retail establishments; and curbside parking spaces along Main Street for convenient shopping.

The plans include a pedestrian connection to the area of "big box" stores, existing and projected, located to the east of the PUD site. This connection will help integrate the drawing power of the big box stores such as Home Depot with the diversity of stores and services, including restaurants, at the Rhode Island Avenue center. The result is, in effect, a substantial and diversified shopping center.

An underutilized site in a prime location will be put to much more beneficial use (in terms of aesthetics and economic development) than the existing parking use, and obviously there will be no displacement of residents or businesses. This will be all net new development that will improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and the city, as well as the city's tax base. The residents will have fast and convenient public transit service to greater Downtown Washington and numerous other major employment centers in the city and region, as well as access to educational, cultural, entertainment and retail facilities in the District of Columbia and the region.

Transit-oriented developments in general help to offset sprawl and undue increases in automobile traffic that would result from the same amount of development in more scattered locations. The town center will have ample amenity spaces and a Main Street that is pedestrian-friendly and easily walked end-to-end while parking once for the convenience of and appeal to shoppers. All in all, the PUD project promises to be an excellent instance of urban infill development, exemplifying the six positive features highlighted in the Office of Planning's report on transit-oriented development:[4]

- Mix of Uses
- Attractive Architecture and Design
- Pedestrian-Friendly, Safe Environment
- Parking Management
- High Quality Public Realm and Amenities
- Orientation and Connectivity.

3. Architecture and Urban Design. The town center is designed to create a strong sense of place generally following "neo-traditional" or "New Urbanist" design principles. The buildings have traditional design detailing and proportions and a human scale. The public spaces are well defined, and the shops along Main Street create a street wall lined with display windows and entrances to shops to create customer interest and to invite walking along the ample sidewalks with landscaping and benches.

If a customer cannot find a space, the access to the retail parking garage is extremely convenient but located so that garage access does not mar the pedestrian

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[4] D.C. Office of Planning, *Transformation: Recreating Transit-Oriented Neighborhood Centers in Washington, D.C.*

orientation of Main Street, its landscaping, benches and wide sidewalks. This length of street will be eminently walkable for shoppers, who will only have to park once to patronize any of the shops or restaurants, as well as the big box stores on adjacent property.

Main Street is approximately 570 feet long and designed with traffic calming features and curbside parking for 37 automobiles. The curbside parking will enable the convenient parking and steady turnover of spaces supportive of stop-and-go businesses such as dry cleaners, coffee shops and specialty food stores. For customers who do not find a parking space on Main Street, the retail parking garage is convenient – visible but not dominating the landscape. The design quality is enhanced by the absence of large areas of surface parking typical of many shopping centers.

A very special design feature is the creation of a new street wall of residential design on Rhode Island Avenue. The northern parking garage actually is constructed down the slope to Rhode Island Avenue, and the street wall of the garage is designed to look like the four-story residential and mixed-use storefronts that line Main Street. This is intended to be a more welcoming urban environment than the bare bluff that exists alongside Rhode Island Avenue at present.

The environment of the town center will be convenient for and friendly to pedestrians. The on-site residential population will help ensure evening as well as daytime pedestrian activity and enhanced public safety due to "eyes on the street." Pedestrian connections to Home Depot, Giant Food and other, future big box retailers on adjacent property to the east of the PUD site will be a convenience as well as enlarging the retail center into a hybrid mall, with both big box stores and specialty retailers.

The architecture and urban design of the project are visually and functionally appealing and will be an enhancement to the neighborhood and the District of Columbia

2. Transportation Benefits and Amenities. The project incorporates numerous beneficial transportation features. First and foremost, of course, is the immediate access to the Metrorail rapid transit system for automobile-free travel around the city and region. The Applicants are constructing a three-level garage to the south of the mixed use town center for use by Metrorail passengers and for Metro's bus drop-off and pickup area. Automobiles and buses bound for this garage and the Metrorail station will have an access road separate from Main Street, leaving Main Street relatively quieter and more appealing and effective for shoppers and residents.

The PUD project will have no adverse effect on traffic or parking on nearby streets. The access road to the Metrorail station already exists and can absorb the moderate increase in traffic generated by this medium-density mixed-use development. The access road is sufficiently long that there is no reason to anticipate traffic backups on

Rhode Island Avenue itself, as documented by the traffic consultants, O.R. George and Associates, in their traffic report.[5]

There is very little likelihood of overspill parking on neighborhood streets. The curbside spaces plus convenient garage spaces for shoppers will accommodate demand, so that shoppers will have little incentive to undergo the inconvenience of parking some blocks away and walking to the stores. The inconvenience would be extreme, given the distance from the PUD site to any relatively quiet, neighborhood streets that might be susceptible to overspill parking, as well as the necessity of walking up a significant grade to the site. This is a self-contained development. The WMATA garage will provide, in effect, retail parking for those passengers who walk to Main Street to make purchases or eat a meal. In the evening hours the garage may tend to be underutilized and again provide shared parking for retail purposes.

The town center will also generate additional ridership for the Metrorail system. Transit-oriented town centers of this type are consistent with District of Columbia and Council of Government policies to accommodate growth in rapid transit corridors without contributing to urban sprawl and undue increases in vehicular traffic. One of the principles in the Charter of the New Urbanism states, [Compared to development at the edges of the metropolis], "Infill development within existing urban areas conserves environmental resources, economic investment and social fabric, while reclaiming marginal and abandoned areas."

B. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The town center project proposed in this application is consistent with and will help carry out numerous policies in the *Comprehensive Plan.* Among these are the following:

Land Use Element – Chapter 11

The consistency of the proposed PUD with the three Comprehensive Plan policies is readily apparent. The proposed mixed-use town center is directly in furtherance of these policies:

1100.8 Development at Metrorail station areas will be undertaken to assure orderly growth, compatible mixes of uses, appropriate densities, good pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and appropriate combinations of public and private action.

1134.1 [Concentrate development planning] on Metrorail station areas that offer opportunities for redevelopment and new growth, particularly those stations areas that have large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land, and maximize development where possible, thus promoting increased ridership for the transit system, assisting the District

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[5] See the traffic report by O. R. George & Associates.

to perform its critical role as the urban center of the region, providing a substantially increased amount of housing and jobs, and generally enhancing the District's economic development efforts.

1108.1(j) Promote the establishment and growth of mixed use commercial centers at appropriate Metrorail stations and major transportation interchange points to reduce automobile congestion, improve air quality, increase jobs, reduce reliance on the automobile and ensure neighborhood stability through cooperative public and private efforts . . .

The land use designation of the site in the Generalized Land Use Map is *Mixed Use: Moderate Density Commercial and Local Public Facilities*. The retail component of the proposed PUD is clearly consistent with the Moderate Density Commercial designation. The Local Public Facilities designation reflects the previous land uses on the adjacent shopping center site and nearby, i.e., the city's uses as an impoundment lot, sand and gravel storage, driver testing, truck parking and repair, etc. Looking to the future, this designation will presumably be changed to be more in line with the other policies in the Land Use Element cited herein that call for mixed residential and commercial development at appropriate Metrorail stations. The applicant believes that the preponderance of land use and other policies supportive of the mixed uses in the PUD overcome the minor deviation from the Generalized Land Use Map.

1100.2 Land use policies must ensure that all neighborhoods have adequate access to commercial services within the District and sufficient housing opportunities to accommodate a range of needs.

The surrounding neighborhoods are generally considered to be underserved by retail, service and restaurant establishments. These uses at Rhode Island Avenue Metro will be supported by Metrorail riders as well as the new on-site residents, thereby providing stronger customer support to make the retail services available to the surrounding neighborhood. The mixture of moderate-sized shops in this development will complement and diversify the offerings of the large, adjacent Home Depot, Giant Food and one additional big box retailer to be determined.

Major Themes – Chapter 1

103.1 The expansion of the quality and quantity of employment opportunities is a central them of the [Comprehensive] Plan. (b) Land development policies will be focused to create more jobs for District residents.

See comments immediately below.

Economic Development – Chapter 7

200.5 The District's overall economic development goals are to generate a high-performance economy, create job opportunities for District residents, expand the revenue

base through a strong citizen-business-government partnership, and develop a program that moves from economic development planning through implementation and completion of projects.

As stated previously, a significant percentage of retail jobs tend to be filled by residents of nearby neighborhoods. This project results from strong and cooperative public-private actions. WMATA is a partner in making this large site in an outstanding location available for development under a long-term ground lease. The applicants are also securing bond financing and other financial assistance from the District of Columbia for project financing in general and for the low- and moderate-income housing units.

Housing – Chapter 3

303.2(d) Provide zoning incentives as appropriate to developers prepared to build low- and moderate-income housing, such as permitting additional densities in exchange for incorporating low- and moderate-income housing in development projects; tie provision of housing into large-scale commercial developments where zoning benefits are sought; and give zoning preferences to mixed-use sites that include housing near appropriate Metrorail stations.

This proposed PUD will provide 20 percent of the dwelling units as affordable housing. Although zoning flexibility is requested in this application, the requested density and intensity of use is actually much less than allowed under the current M (General Industry) zoning of the site. The M District allows density of 6.0 FAR, a maximum height of 90 feet, and allows all commercial and industrial uses, whereas the requested C-2-B is limited to 2.0 FAR of specified commercial uses in a PUD. The actual proposed development only uses a small portion of the 6.0 FAR of residential or mixed-use density allowed with a PUD. Clearly, the housing is near a Metrorail station, as indicated in the policy.

Urban Design – Chapter 7

712.2(a) Encourage well-designed developments in areas that are vacant, underused or deteriorated. These developments should have strong identities.

712.2(b) Encourage in-fill development of attractive design quality in deteriorated areas to stabilize the physical fabric and encourage renovation and redevelopment.

712.2(g) Utilize large-scale development or capital improvements projects as opportunities for establishing a positive image or redirection in deteriorated areas.

713.2(d) Encourage the design of mixed-use development for large-scale projects to create active use during both daytime and evening hours

713.2(g) Encourage special design quality around Metrorail stations to create aesthetically pleasing physical concentrations of activity and development.

As stated previously, the town center is designed to create a strong sense of place generally following "neo-traditional" or "New Urbanist" design principles. The buildings have traditional design detailing and proportions and a human scale. The public spaces are well-defined, and the shops along Main Street create a street wall lined with display windows and entrances to shops to create customer interest and invite walking along the ample sidewalks with landscaping and benches and other amenities. The combination of residential, retail and office uses will generate 18-hour pedestrian activity on the site, reinforced by the many Metrorail passengers who are expected to walk over to Main Street shops. This development will help create urban fabric between the Metro station and the surrounding neighborhoods (in lieu of what has been for many years a large "no man's land"), in concert with the adjacent large format shopping center. This general area to the east of this Metrorail station has been underutilized and generally an eyesore for many years.

The design image will be extremely positive, and expectations are that the development will successfully attract residents and retailers. The applicant has had numerous expressions of interest from established retailers. A study entitled "The Return of Town Centers" by Charles Bohl, cited in the April/May 2004 issue of *New Urban News* states, "Demand for town center housing has been very strong in a wide variety of markets throughout the U.S., and rental rates, sales and resales of properties have exceeded expectations. . . . Mizner Park's (Boca Raton, FL) apartments above shops and cafes have proven extremely popular, particularly those facing the bustling central plaza and are now considered the most successful parts of the project." Bohl also found evidence of strong retail sales at a number of town centers. Charles Lockwood, author of another study of eight town centers, is quoted as stating that mixed use town centers have higher development costs than standard shopping centers, so the strong economics of town centers are tempered to a degree.

Environmental Protection – Chapter 4

Regarding water quality and control of storm water run-off from the PUD site, the applicant notes that the existing parking lot is completely paved and thus constitutes a high water run-off situation. The PUD development will use state-of-the-art storm water run-off controls and will release less water from the site than the present condition.

403.2(c) [Improve air quality by] promot[ing] land use patterns and transportation services that decrease reliance on automobiles for commuting and other routine trips.

See comments immediately below.

Transportation – Chapter 5

502.2(a) Support land use arrangements that simplify and economize transportation services, including mixed-use zones that permit the co-development of

residential and non-residential uses to promote higher density residential development at strategic locations, particularly near appropriate Metrorail stations.

The residents of Rhode Island Avenue Metro will be able to walk to a variety of stores, convenience services and restaurants, as well as to the Metrorail station and buses. Some of the retail employees and the office workers will be able to commute to the site by bus or Metrorail. Metrorail passengers will be able to do some of their shopping in conjunction with their work trips, thereby saving a separate automobile trip to shopping elsewhere.

C. No Adverse Effects on the Surrounding Area

The third general test for approval of a PUD is that there will be no more than an acceptable level of impact on the surrounding area and on public services and facilities. In this case, there will in all likelihood be no adverse effects as a result of development of the proposed PUD. The site is currently underutilized – devoted only to parking for the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail station – and will be put into a more productive mixture of uses. The parking function will still be provided within a new parking garage on an adjacent site. There will be no displacement of existing businesses or residents. The traffic consultant has documented that no adverse traffic or parking effects will occur on surrounding streets. The limited number of school-age children that will reside in the project are unlikely to create any crowding problem in nearby public schools.

The architecture and urban design of the project are visually and functionally appealing and will be an enhancement of the neighborhood and the District of Columbia, rather than a detriment. The predominant building height is a moderate four stories and will not create any unfavorable relationship of scale to surrounding existing development and the setting adjacent to a Metrorail station.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENT

Members of the development team have met with Advisory Neighborhood Commission ("ANC") 5B and the single-member district representative for ANC 5B03. The ANC did not, of course, take official action at this early stage in the PUD process. However, ANC members were quite receptive to the plan. The applicant will continue to work with the ANC and residents and community groups in the surrounding neighborhoods to keep the community informed and attempt to secure formal support for the PUD.

VII CONCLUSION

The applicant submits that the proposed mixed-use town center offers numerous and important project benefits and public amenities to the District of Columbia, is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*, and will have only positive – not negative – effects on the surrounding neighborhoods. The applicant requests that the Zoning Commission schedule a public hearing to consider adopting the application.

Respectfully submitted,
ARNOLD & PORTER LLP

Cynthia A. Giordano

Nathan W. Gross, AICP

Attachments

Exhibit A: **Neighborhood Context Map**



NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

Exhibit B: **Site Analysis Chart**

Rhode Island Avenue Metro

Site Analysis

14-Sep-04

Gross Site Area	8.7787	acres =	382,400	sq. ft.
Net Area	7.33348	acres =	319,446	sq. ft.

	1 BR				2 BR						3 BR			Total	Common** Areas	Retail****	Office*****	Gross Floor Area
	1A	1B	1C	1D	2A	2B	2C	2E	2F	2 TH	3A	3B	3C					
Unit Size*	750	975	650	750	1140	1200	1088	1200	970	1200	1320							
Building A-1																		
1st Floor	2				2					11	2			17	5,244			25,000
2nd Floor	2		2		4	1					2			11				25,000
3rd Floor	13		2		4	1					2			22				25,000
4th Floor	13		2		4	1					2			22				25,000
Sub Total	30	0	6	0	14	3	0	0	0	11	8	0	0	72				**100,000**
Building A-2																		
1st Floor	1				1									2		20,573		22,000
2nd Floor	9				9	1		1						20				22,000
3rd Floor	9				9	1		1						20				22,000
4th Floor	9				9	1		1						20				22,000
Sub Total	28	0	0	0	28	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	62				**88,000**
Building B																		
Elev. 93.0																	5,390	5,390
Elev.105.0																	5,390	5,390
Main Street 117.0	2						2							4	611	16,947		17,558
2nd Floor	8				5	1	2						1	17				20,500
3rd Floor	8				5	1	2						1	17				20,500
4th Floor	6				4	1							1	12				20,500
Sub Total	24	0	0	0	14	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	3	50				**89,838**
Building C																		
Basement										2		1		3				3,675
1st Floor												1		1	1,502	26,700		35,000
2nd Floor	8	2	2	1	11	1	1		1			1		28				32,000
3rd Floor	8	2	2	1	11	1	1		1			1		28				32,000
4th Floor	8	2	2	1	11	1	1		1			1		28				32,000
Sub Total	24	6	6	3	33	3	3	0	3	2	0	5	0	88				**134,675**
Totals	106	6	12	3	89	12	9	3	3	13	8	5	3					
	127				**129**						**16**			**272**	**7,357**	**64,220**	**10,780**	**530,688**
	46.7%				47.4%						5.9%							**1.66**

Parking

Level	Metro		Residential	Mixed-Use	On-Street	Taxi Drop	Total*
	Kiss & Ride	Parking*	Garage 1	Garage 2			
G-3 (96.33)				101			101
G-2 (106.83)				101			101
G-1 (117.33)				97			97
Main Street	17		33		30	3	83
2		100	36				136
3		100	36				136
4			36				36
	17	200	141	299	30	3	**690**

Approximate Gross Floor Area for Garage

Garage I	56,505
Garage II	61,670
	118,175 FAR

Residential, Retail, Office and Garage FAR For PUD

FAR

*Metro Parking is not part of this PUD. For Information Purposes

Exhibit C: **Project Plans**

RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

PHASE 1 - PUD SUBMISSION

DEVELOPERS

A & R DEVELOPMENT CORP

814 10TH STREET, NW, SUITE 600
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005
TEL: 202.347.2257
FAX: 202.347.0324

MID-CITY URBAN

SILVER SPRING METRO PLAZA II
8403 COLESVILLE ROAD, SUITE 400
SILVER SPRING, MD 20910
TEL: 301.562.1600
FAX: 301.562.1670

URBAN DESIGNER/ARCHITECT

LESSARD GROUP

8521 LEESBURG PIKE, SUITE 700
VIENNA, VA 22182
TEL: 703.760.9344
FAX: 703.760.9328

ATTORNEY

ARNOLD & PORTER, LLP

555 TWELFTH STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004-1206
TEL: 202.942.5956
FAX: 202.942.5999

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

STUDIO 39

6416 GROVEDALE DRIVE, SUITE 100-A
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22310
TEL: 703.719.6500
FAX: 703.719.6503

CIVIL ENGINEER

GREENHORNE & O'MARA, INC.

9001 EDMONSTON ROAD
GREENBELT, MARYLAND 20770
TEL: 301.982.2800
FAX: 301.513.8883

TRAFFIC ENGINEER

O.R. GEORGE & ASSOCIATES

10320 GREENBELT ROAD, SUITE 310
LANHAM, MARYLAND 20706
TEL: 301.794.7700
FAX: 301.794.4400

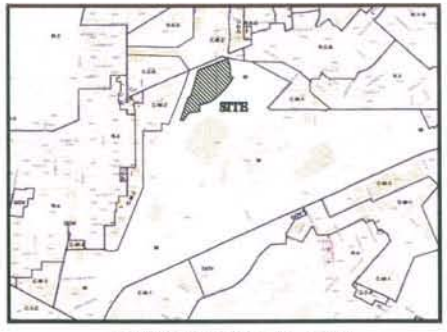
RETAIL MARKETING

WALKER DEVELOPMENT

1800 SEMINOLE STREET
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48214
TEL: 313.821.0775

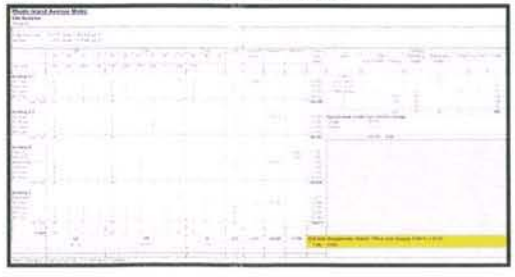


AERIAL MAP

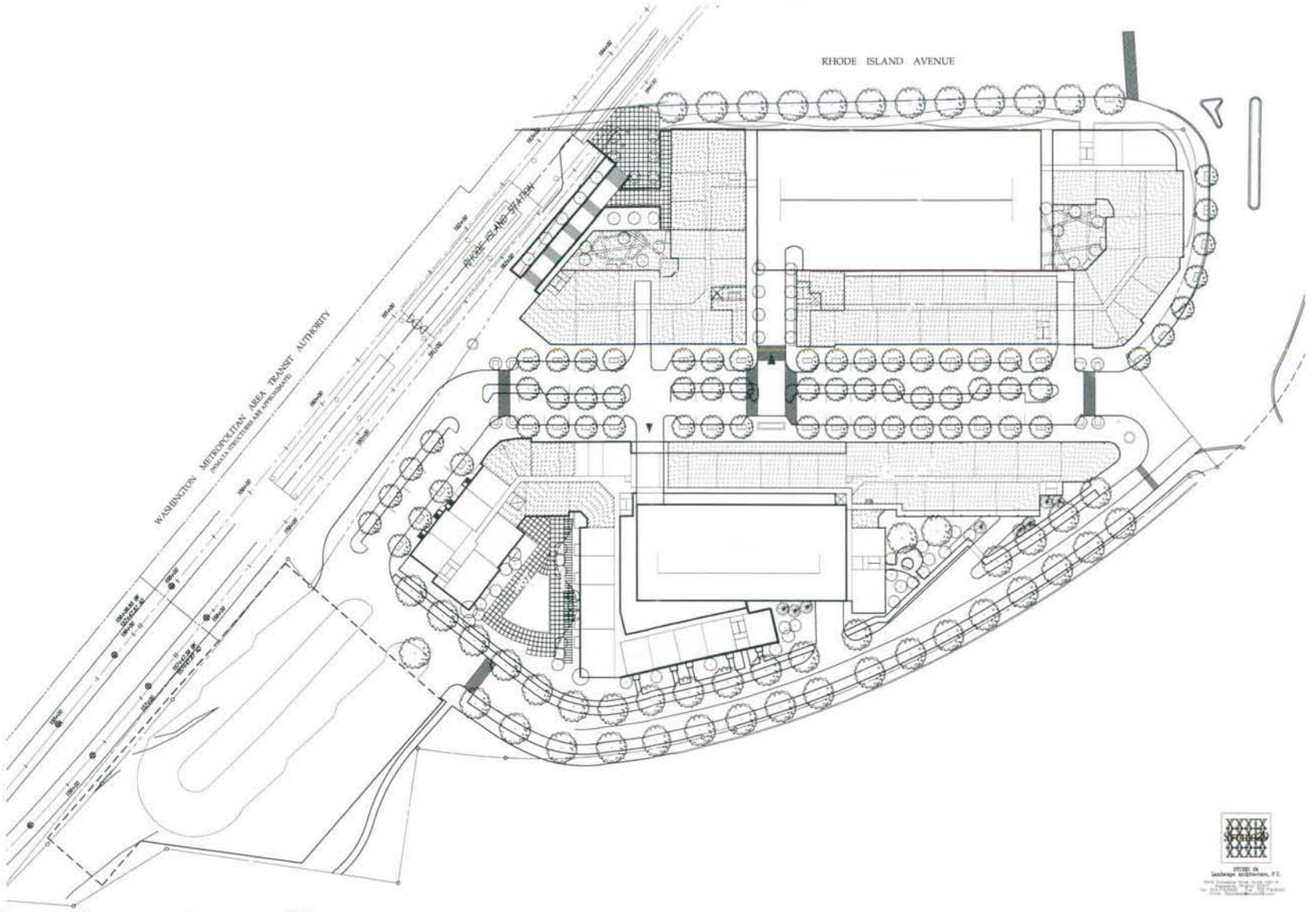


EXISTING ZONING MAP

SITE ANALYSIS



NO.	SHEET INDEX
0	COVER SHEET
1	ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN
2	MAIN STREET LEVEL
3	RESIDENTIAL LEVEL
4	ELEVATIONS
5	SECTIONS
6	SURVERY PLAN
7	ENGINEERING PLAN



RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 18, 2004

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

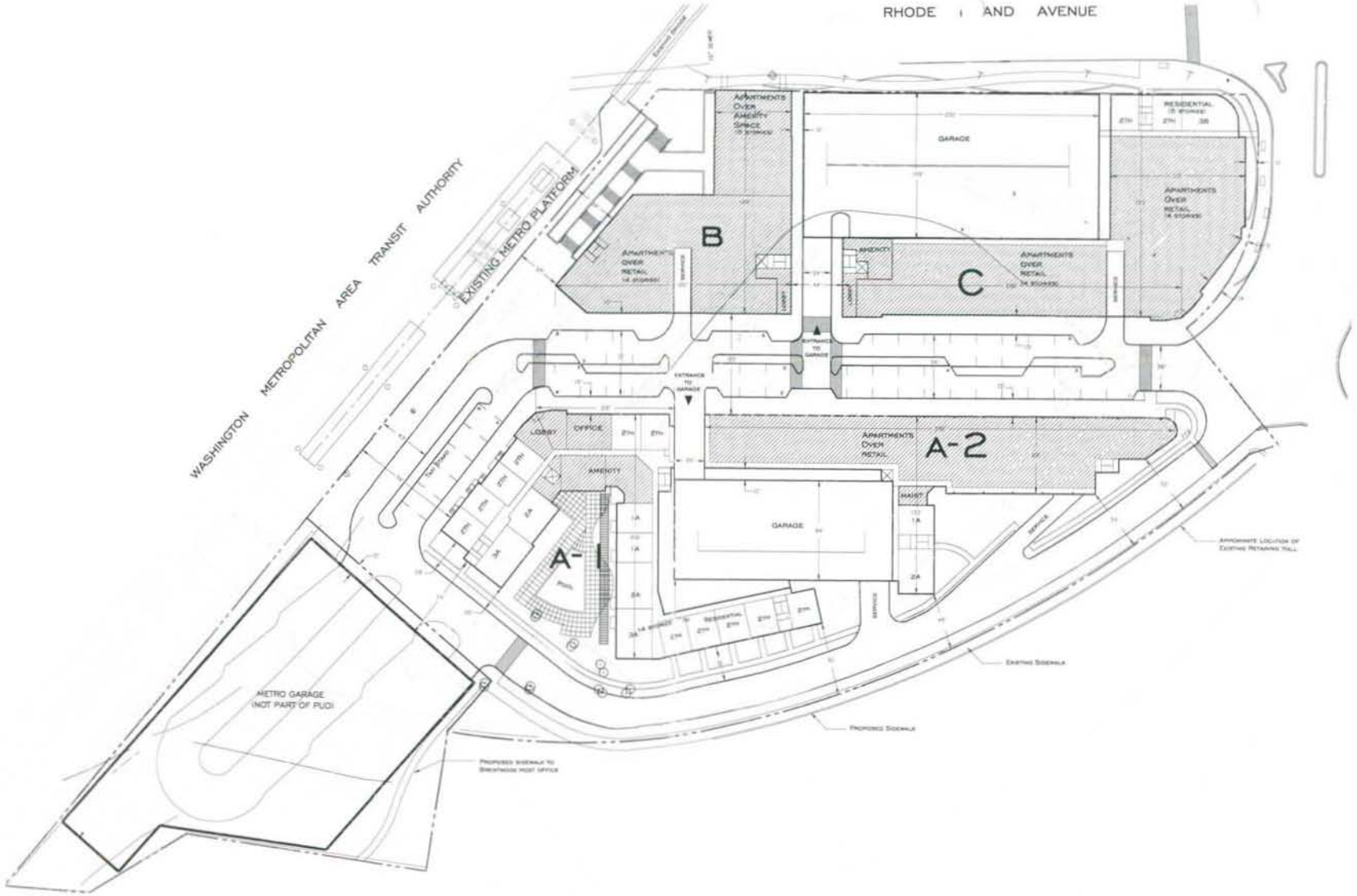
A & R DEVELOPMENT - MID CITY URBAN

THE LESSARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP INC.

0 15 30 60
1"=30'

N

1



RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON D.C.
SEPTEMBER 17, 2004

CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN

MAIN STREET LEVEL

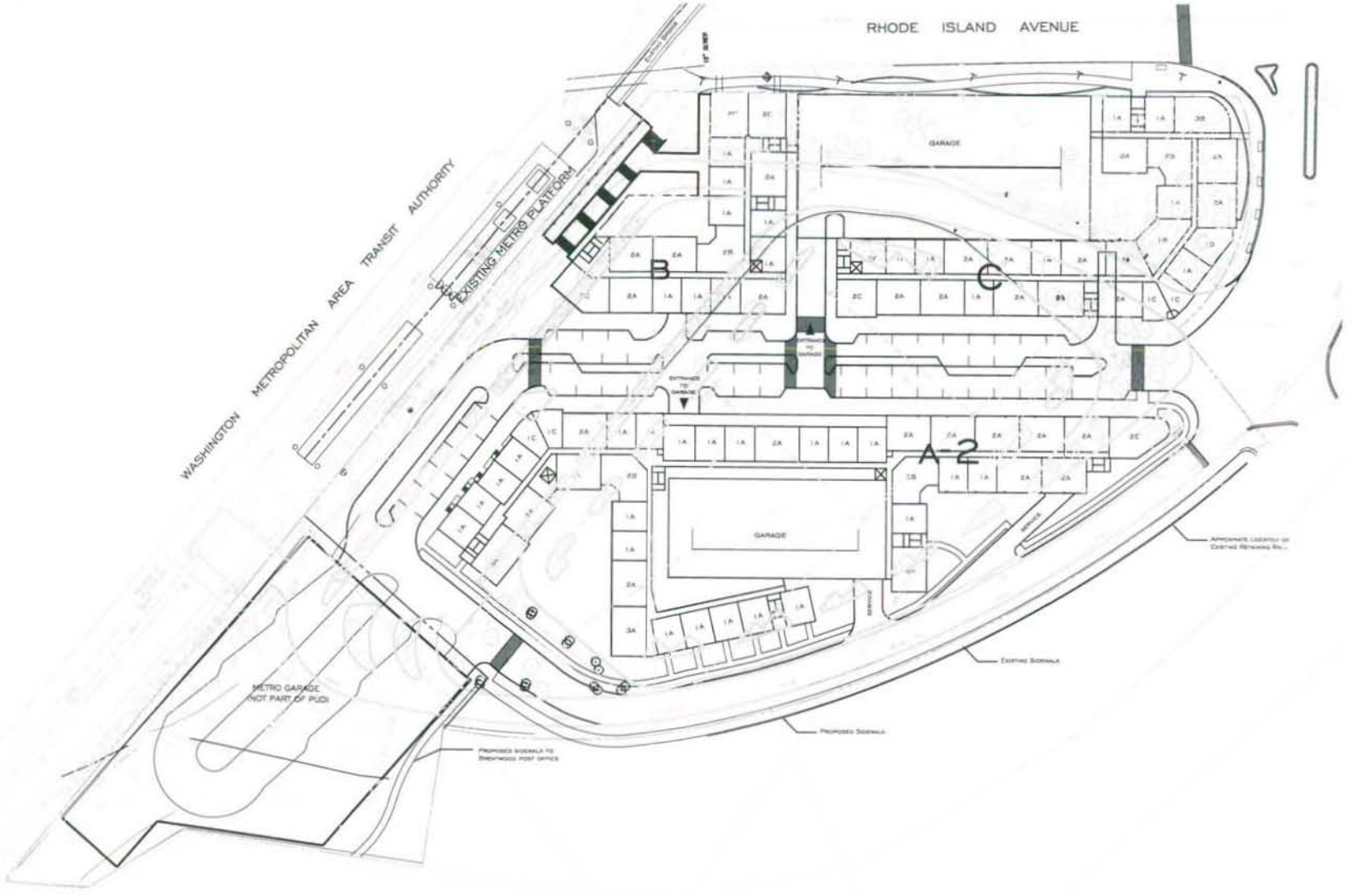
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THE LESSARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP INC.

0 15 30 60
1"=30'

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2



RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON D.C.
SEPTEMBER 15 2004

CONCEPTUAL FLOOR PLAN

TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL FLOORS

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THE LESSARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP INC.

0 15 30 60
1"=30'

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3



SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET



RHODE ISLAND AVENUE

RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON D.C.
SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

ELEVATIONS

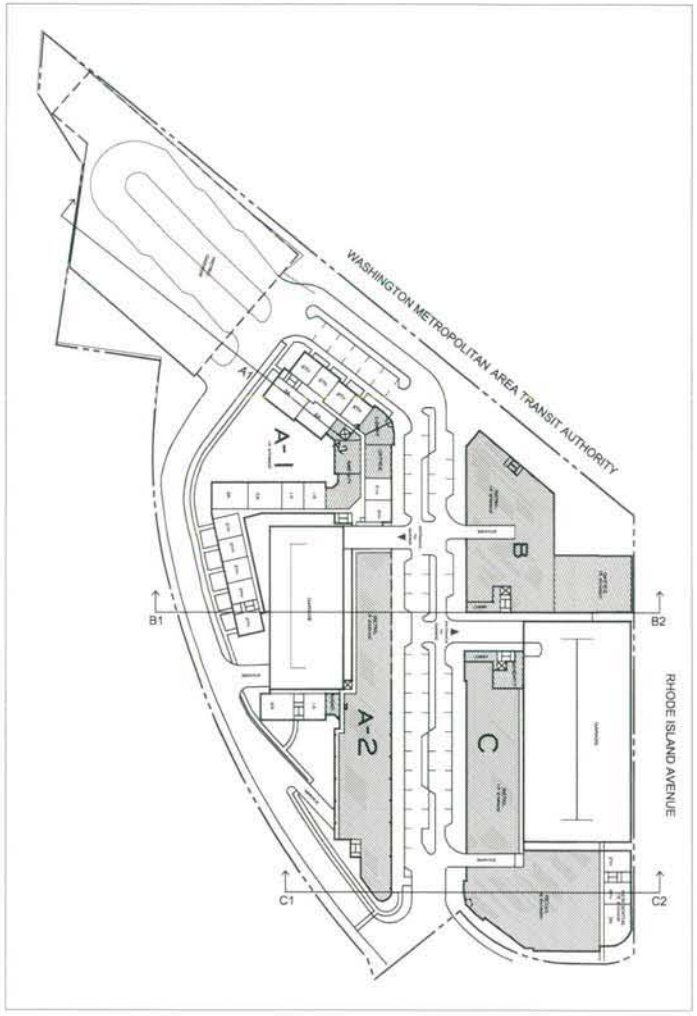
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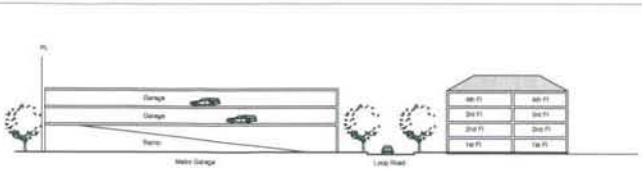
THE LESSARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP INC.

NOT TO SCALE

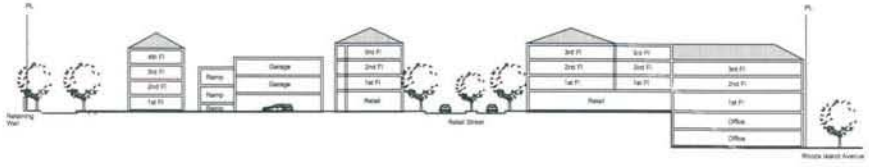
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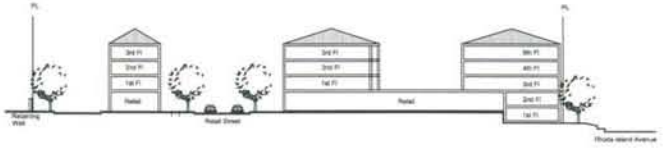




Section A1-A2



Section B1-B2



Section C1-C2

RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON D.C.
SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

A & R DEVELOPMENT - MID CITY URBAN

SECTIONS

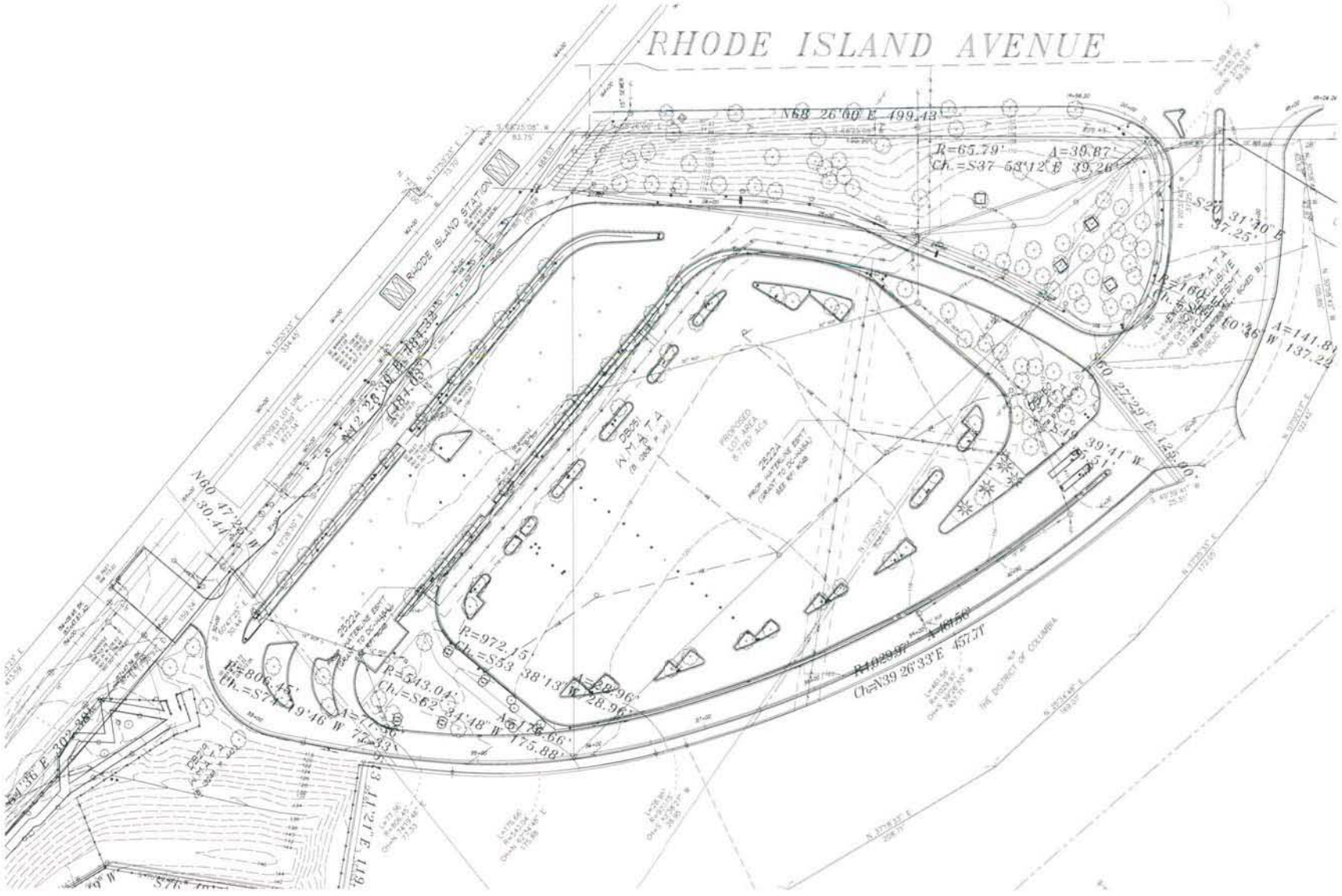
CONCEPTUAL SCHEME

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8603 Westwood Center Drive, Suite 400, Vienna, VA 22182 703/760-9044 Fax 703/760-9339

0 15 30 60
1"=30'

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RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON D.C.
SEPTEMBER 18, 2004

SURVEY PLAN

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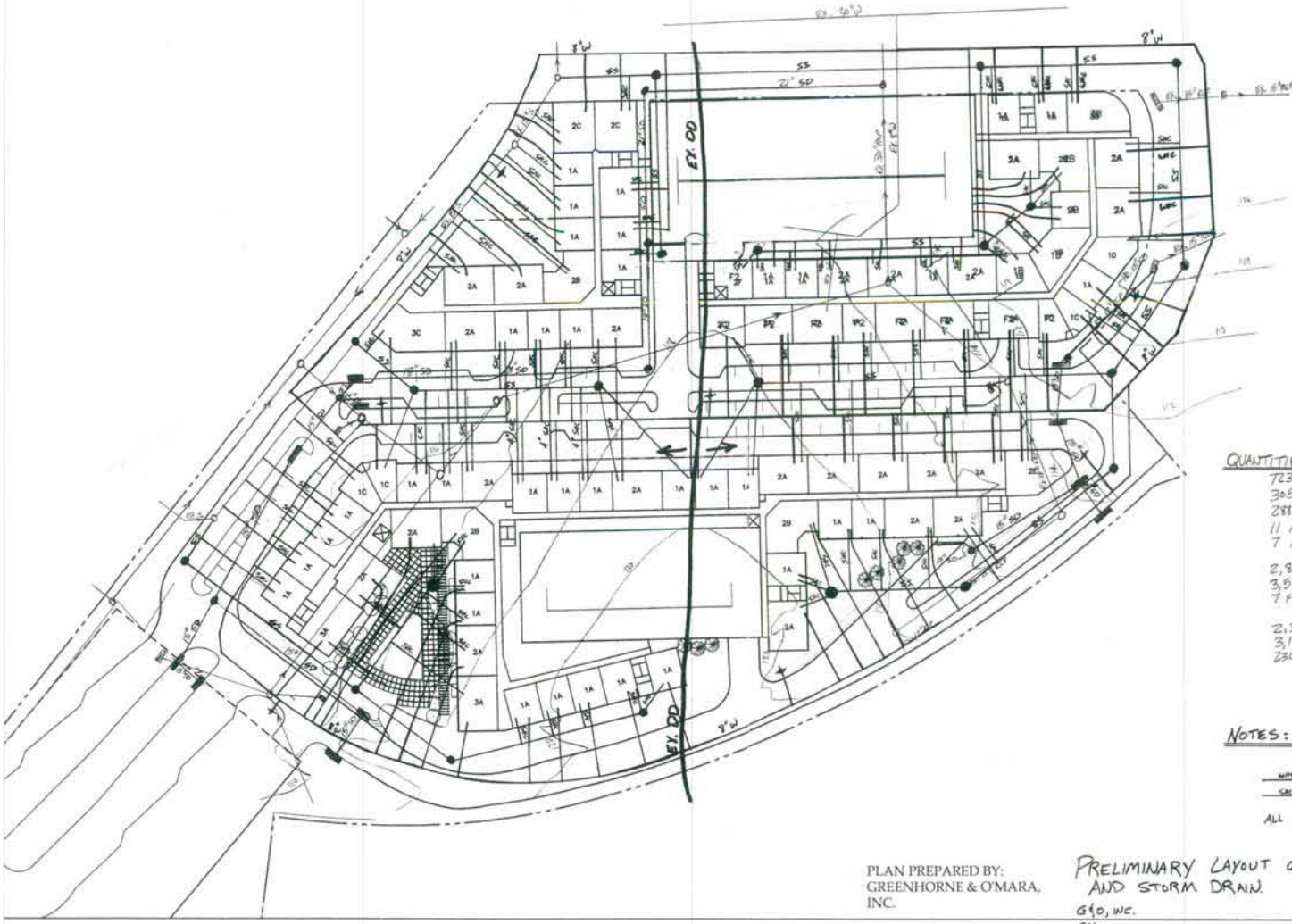
THE LESSARD ARCHITECTURAL GROUP INC.
8603 Westwood Center Drive, Suite 400, Vienna, VA 22182 703/760-9344 fax 703/760-9316

0 15 30 60
1"=30'

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QUANTITIES

723 LF 15" RCP
305 LF 18" RCP
288 LF 21" RCP
11 A-10 INLETS
7 A-MANHOLES

2,905 LF 8" D.I. WATER
3,536 LF 1-½" WHC = 104 UNITS X 34 LF AVE
7 FIRE HYDRANTS

2,380 LF 8" S
3,120 LF 4" SHC = 104 UNITS X 30 LF AVE
230 VF 4'-DIAM. MANHOLE = ((7 x 10 VF) + (4 x 15 VF))

NOTES:

WHC 1½" WHC
SHC 4" CHC

ALL WATER & SEWER MAINS @ 8" DIAM.

PLAN PREPARED BY:
GREENHORNE & O'MARA, INC.

PRELIMINARY LAYOUT OF WATER, SEWER, AND STORM DRAIN.

GLO, WC.
GAL

9-13-04

RHODE ISLAND AVENUE METRO

WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

ENGINEERING PLAN

A & R DEVELOPMENT - MID CITY URBAN

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0 15 30 60
1"=30'

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