

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION**  
*for*  
**REZONING of THE ASHBY at MCLEAN**  
**WashREIT**  
**Tax Map # 30-2((1))30B**  
**June 23, 2021**

**BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF PROPOSAL**

The Ashby, the existing multifamily building on the property, was built pursuant to RZ C-220, which rezoned the property and other land area to the PDH-50 zoning district in 1972. With the adoption of the new Zoning Ordinance, the zoning district was converted to PDH-40. This set of applications are a request to convert the building's significantly underperforming commercial space on the second floor, as approved in the original rezoning, to residential units. The conversion of 238,855 square feet of the existing commercial space will result in the addition of 18 residential units.

In order to accomplish this, the property must be rezoned to the PRM District from the existing PDH-40 District because the residential density is maximized for the property pursuant to previous zonings. There will be no changes to the building form or massing, nor are there any changes proposed to the existing site configuration or surface parking. These changes are internal to the building and thus, the existing floor area ratio of 1.946 will not change; this request is simply a change in use.

**DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING PROPERTY**

The existing 12-story building was constructed in the early 1980's and contains 256 residential units as well as some first and second floor service-oriented retail and commercial office uses. There are 233 surface parking spaces on the property and 108 spaces in the underground garage. There are two access points to the property off of Beverly Road and an additional access point off of Beverly Road through the McLean House property. There is also an access point off of Fleetwood Road. The property contains mature landscaping which, since no site modifications are proposed, will be retained.

**COMPLIANCE WITH RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA**

For the reasons stated below, the subject rezoning fully complies with the applicable Residential Development Criteria contained in *Appendix 9* of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, Land Use – 2011 Edition. Specific compliance with the Criteria is as follows:

**I. SITE DESIGN**

- (A) **Consolidation**. The entire existing Ashby Apartment complex is located on a single lot. As stated, no site changes are proposed.
  
- (B) **Layout**. No site changes are proposed.

(C) **Open Space.** The site layout, as approved pursuant to DPA C-220 contains 20 percent open space which meets the current Ordinance requirement in the PRM District.

(D) **Landscaping.** The existing site has well-maintained, mature landscaping and no changes are proposed.

(E) **Amenities.** The existing development has a pool, fitness center, business center, and a deli.

**II. NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT.** Since there are no site changes proposed, the relationship of the existing Ashby Apartments to the surrounding area will not change.

**III. ENVIRONMENT.** There are no significant environmental features on the property other than the existing landscaping which will be retained. No site changes are proposed.

**IV. TREE PRESERVATION AND TREE COVER REQUIREMENTS.** The tree preservation and the tree cover requirements are met by the existing conditions on the site.

**V. TRANSPORTATION.** The Applicant has evaluated the existing parking configuration and parking utilization at the property. The existing building contains 256 multifamily units and 331 parking spaces are provided on site. As previously approved, this represents a 38% reduction from the current Zoning Ordinance. With the conversion of 23,855 square feet of commercial space to 18 residential units, the parking reduction actually reduces to only 27% which represents an improvement over the existing conditions. Since a reduction request is still necessary, Gorove Slade, the Applicant's traffic engineer, has completed a revised parking reduction study. The proposed parking reduction of 27% is within the expected range according to Fairfax County's policy standards for properties that are proximate to mass transit. This property has a bus stop on the sidewalk directly in front of the building and furthermore is located along a busy corridor that is served by multiple feeder buses, which run at regularly scheduled times, directly linked to the McLean Metro Station. Additionally, as noted above, the substitution of residential use for commercial use would result in a lesser parking requirement for the same square footage.

**VI. PUBLIC FACILITIES.** The Applicant plans to offset the addition of 18 dwelling units with appropriate proffers as the review process continues.

**VII. AFFORDABLE HOUSING.** The project is exempt from today's affordable dwelling unit requirements.

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The Ashby Apartments Rezoning

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**VIII. HERITAGE RESOURCES.** To the Applicant's knowledge, there are no structures of historical significance on the property and the property itself is not of historical significance.

**COMPLIANCE WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LANGUAGE, MCLEAN CBC**

The property is located in Subarea 29 of the Mclean CBC in the McLean Planning District in Area II. The plan language for this subarea establishes this area as a core area of office and residential uses. Conversion of all or a portion of the existing commercial space is in conformance with this language.

**COMPLIANCE WITH ZONING ORDINANCE REGULATIONS**

Article 6: Planned Development District Regulations, Sect. 6-400

The proposed use of multifamily dwelling units is a permitted principal use in a PRM District and any associated commercial uses will conform with those specified secondary uses for the District. The development conforms to the standards set forth in Part 1 of Article 16 as discussed below and the use will comply with the performance standards set forth in Article 14. The minimum district size, bulk regulations, density and open space meet the requirements of Article 6.

Article 16: Sect. 16-101, General Standards for All Planned Developments

1. General Standard 1 requires conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. As discussed above, the conversion to 18 residential units is in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan which recognizes the residential use in this subarea.
2. The Application meets General Standard 2 which requires a finding that the proposed planned development achieves the stated purpose and intent of the planned development more effectively than a conventional district. The property is already zoned PDH-40, albeit under a prior Zoning Ordinance. The PRM district will allow the flexibility needed to convert the underperforming commercial space to residential use
3. There are no scenic assets or natural features to preserve on the property.
4. General Standard 4 requires that the development will not degrade the use or value of surrounding properties and will not hinder the development of surrounding undeveloped properties. The proposed conversion will not be apparent to the surrounding uses. No site changes are proposed.
5. The proposal meets General Standard 5 as adequate public facilities are available to serve the property.
6. General Standard 6 does not apply in that the site is in an area where connections to internal and external facilities already exist.

**WAIVERS**

The application includes two waiver requests. One is for a reduction in parking as discussed within this statement. The other waiver is to the PFM for an entrance less than 30 feet in width. This is an existing condition.

**CONCLUSION**

These applications request a simple conversion of underperforming commercial space to usable residential units, revitalizing this property without any significant impacts to the area. For all of the aforementioned reasons, the applicant respectfully requests the Staff and Planning Commission endorse, and the Board of Supervisors approve this rezoning request.