

**COMMISSIONERS OF UPPER DUBLIN TOWNSHIP  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ZONING**

**To:** Planning Commission, Tom Fountain, P.E., Virginia Drive Land, LLC

**From:** Richard D. Barton, Community Planner and Zoning Officer



**Date:** August 2, 2019

**Subject:**

1125 Virginia Drive

Preliminary comments on sketch plan for residential and commercial development

UD #19-06

---

A. Background

Virginia Drive Land, LLC submitted a Sketch Plan to the Township on July 10, 2019 for the development of a 16.79 acre site at 1125 Virginia Drive, a consolidation of three lots. A stream intersects the frontage, with associated floodplain, and there are wetland areas at both ends of the site. The property is currently developed as offices for ADP Corporation. It is proposed to redevelop the site for 200 apartment units, 32 townhouses, and a 5,000 sq.ft. retail building. The property is zoned GFW – Greater Fort Washington district.

I have reviewed the sketch plan based on the GFW ordinance (Zoning Code, Article XXXVIII) and the design standards found in Section 212-35.2 of the Subdivision and Land Development Code (SALDO). I note the July 10, 2019 letter from George Bongart, P.E. of Bohler Engineering, who has summarized the points of relief needed.

B. Required variances

1. To allow parking within the 50-foot setback from the PA Turnpike right-of-way (Section 255-294.A.2). Proposed parking spaces range from 27.0 feet to 48.9 feet from the right-of-way. The applicant states this is needed to keep the parking spaces from encroaching into the floodplain or the horizontal floodplain buffer along Virginia Drive.
2. Parking space width: Zoning Code Section 255-140 sets the required width of a parking space at 9 ½ feet. The plan proposes 9-foot wide perpendicular spaces. Mr. Bongart cites Section 212-17.F of the SALDO in requesting a waiver, but this is actually a variance.

3. Construction of buildings and parking within the riparian corridor: The Township Stormwater Management Ordinance, Section 206-31.J states in part: “No building or structure of any kind or any work, such as earth disturbance or excavation, shall be permitted within the riparian corridor except as permitted within the Floodplain Conservation District under Chapter 255, Article XXII, Floodplain Conservation District.” The construction of buildings will require a variance from Section 255-165.C(1), and parking requires a variance from Section 255-165.C (11).

#### C. Conditional Use

I agree with Mr. Bongart’s description of the required conditional uses for the proposed land uses, the construction of storm sewers within the floodplain, and to allow the crossings into the site across Pine Run.

#### D. Residential density

The apartment portion of the site is 9.13 acres in size. With the proposed 200 units, the density is 21.9 units per acre, less than the 40 units per acre permitted. The townhouse portion is 6.50 acres. With 32 homes, the density is 4.9 units per acre, and 8 units per acre is permitted.

#### E. Transportation facilities

New buildings three or more stories in height shall provide two or more alternative transportation facilities (Section 212-35.2.D.2). This can be identified at the preliminary plan stage. Some examples are:

1. Installation of a bus/shuttle shelter near the apartments.
2. Provide one electric car charging station for every 25 parking spaces at the apartment building.
3. Provide an indoor bicycle storage area.
4. Provide an indoor, ground floor waiting area for ride-sharing, etc.

#### F. Green space

A minimum 15% of gross lot area is to be in green space (Section 212-35.2.H.1). The plan indicates 31.3% as green space. At least 3% of the gross lot area is to be in “public space”. The plan shows 6.8%, and the location and its use should be identified. Public space may include a plaza or other outdoor gathering area, and trails where applicable (Section 255-7).

G. Architectural form

Section 212-35.2.K.7 states that new building materials and colors shall be non-white, in order to minimize reflective glare. The apartment elevations show portions of the exterior walls in white.