

**BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings

100 Maryland Avenue, Suite 200

Rockville, Maryland 20850

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**Paramount Self Storage, LLC**

Applicant.

Steve Cratin

Nana Baine

Patrick La Vay

Rebekah Brown

For the Application.

Elizabeth C. Rogers, Esquire

Attorney for the Applicant.

Zoning Application No. H-157

Conditional Use CU 25-01

---

**APPLICANT'S PRE-HEARING STATEMENT**

The Applicant, Paramount Self-Storage, LLC, is submitting this Pre-Hearing Statement (the "Statement") in connection with the above-referenced Local Map Amendment and Conditional Use Applications (the "Applications"). The Applicant hereby incorporates by reference its Land Use Report, submitted with the Applications, which contains additional information in support of the application and justification for the request.

**I. STATEMENT OF GROUNDS UPON WHICH THE CASE IS BASED AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REZONING APPLICATION.**

The Property, subject to the Applications, is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Somerville Drive and Paramount Drive in Rockville, Maryland. The Property is more particularly known as Parcel H-2 in the "Derwood, Somerville Addition" subdivision, as recorded among the Montgomery County Land Records ("Land Records") at Plat No. 10829 and is comprised of approximately 91,476 square feet (or approximately 2.1 acres) of land area. The Property is an irregular shaped corner lot that has an angled boundary along Paramount Drive which, in part, dictates the building placement along the street.

The Property is currently zoned CR-2.0, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120' and is improved with a series of one-story exterior accessed storage buildings, outdoor vehicular storage, and associated surface parking. According to the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation ("SDAT") records, the existing buildings were developed circa 1974 and collectively, have approximately 38,097 square feet of above grade floor area. Specifically, the existing facility consists of 11 separate storage structures with interior vehicular circulation and parking. The existing structures are grandfathered under Section 7.7.1.A and may remain in their existing condition. However, these structures fail to activate and engage the street. The existing buildings completely turn their back on Somerville, with a long blank wall along this frontage. Although the building fronting on Paramount has individual access doors for the units along the street, this façade is stark and uninviting with painted CMU and solid metal doors. There are no streetscape improvements along either of the Property's frontages and the aging, existing facility is largely impervious and does not provide any stormwater management.

The LMA seeks to rezone the Property to the CRTF-2.75, C-2.75, R-1.5, H-120 zone, to accommodate redevelopment of the existing, grandfathered, aging self-storage facility with a modern self-storage facility, with the potential for ancillary neighborhood serving retail use on the ground floor. Specifically, the Applicant is proposing to comprehensively redevelop the Property with four and six-story self-storage buildings featuring high-quality architectural elements, building materials, and improved site design. The Project will activate and enhance the Property's external street frontages both through the building design and streetscape improvements. Notably, the Applicant's proposal represents the first redevelopment in the Metro South neighborhood since the Sector Plan was initially adopted in 2006. The subject Applications proposes to implement many of the *2021 Approved and Adopted Shady Grove Sector Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment* (the "Sector Plan") priorities as it relates to activating and enhancing the streetscape; retrofitting auto-centric development; enhancing pedestrian and bicyclist mobility; and promoting sustainability through stormwater management, tree canopy and energy generation. The proposed Project will provide additional, needed self-storage space, in a modern, secure facility, to serve the surrounding community and support future development in the area. The Applicant is hopeful that these improvements and overall redevelopment of the Property will catalyze redevelopment in the surrounding neighborhood.

The proposed redevelopment will provide significant environmental benefits by decreasing the amount of impervious area that exists on-site today (*i.e.* approximately 76% proposed, as compared to 93% existing imperviousness); providing stormwater management, where none currently exists; and including rooftop solar photovoltaic system(s) to offset the energy consumed on-site and create an energy net zero facility. As discussed in greater detail below, the Project will significantly improve pedestrian circulation by providing streetscape improvements along both street frontages, where no sidewalks exists today, along with additional street trees to add to the overall tree canopy in the Plan area. The resulting redevelopment will transform this aging industrial site into a high-quality, modern facility with enhanced site design

that will contribute to the much-anticipated revitalization of the Metro South neighborhood, in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Sector Plan.

The Project will be constructed in two phases. The first phase will include development of a four-story, modern self-storage building, totaling approximately 159,640 square feet of gross floor area (“Phase One”). The Phase One building is sited on the southern portion of the Property with frontage on Paramount Drive. The leasing office will be constructed at the ground floor of the Phase One building, with ample transparency and a direct pedestrian entrance from the street, to activate the pedestrian environment. The second phase proposes the construction of a second, six-story building, comprised of approximately 122,400 square feet (“Phase Two”). The Phase Two building will be located on the northern portion of the Property closer to the intersection of Somerville Drive and Paramount Drive, which will define and activate this corner. The ground floor of the Phase Two building has been designed to provide flexible space that can be devoted to either self-storage or a retail use, if the surrounding area and market support (at Applicant’s sole determination). A covered drive/loading aisle is proposed within the building to facilitate safe and efficient vehicular circulation and access to storage units in both buildings. This loading aisle conceals the majority of customer loading activity from the public. The Phase One building will extend over the central drive aisle and conceal the associated parking and loading from view. Additional parking and loading is provided at the rear of the site, with the buildings covering from above.

The requested rezoning and proposed Project fulfills all of the purposes and requirements of the CRTF Zone (Zoning Ordinance, Division 5.3), and is in substantial conformance with the goals and recommendations of the Sector Plan. The Project also complies with all general requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The requested rezoning also satisfies all necessary findings contained in Zoning Ordinance Section 7.2.1.E, for approval of the LMA; and the Conditional Use satisfies all findings contained in the Zoning Ordinance Section 7.3.1.E, for approval. Compliance with these requirements is discussed in detail in the Applicant's Land Use Report.

Adequate public facilities and services will be available to serve the development on the Property. As discussed in detail in the Applicant’s Land Use Report and demonstrated in the Traffic Statement submitted in connection with these Applications, the Project will result in fewer than 50 net new peak hour person trips. The proposed self-storage facility generates a total of 29 net new AM peak hour person trips and 48 net new PM peak hour person trips. As such, the Project is exempt from Local Area Transportation Review (“LATR”).

The Property will be served by existing water and sewer mains. Electric, gas and telecommunications services are also available to serve the Property. Other public facilities and services – including police stations, firehouses, and health care facilities – are currently available in the vicinity of the Project.

The evidence to be presented will demonstrate: (1) that the Local Map Amendment and Conditional Use satisfies the requirements of the CRTF Zone as set forth in Zoning Ordinance; (2) that the available public facilities and services will be adequate to serve the proposed redevelopment under the Growth and Infrastructure Policy; (3) that the Local Map Amendment and Conditional Use substantially conforms with the recommendations of the Sector Plan for the Property; and (4) that approval of the LMA complies with the required findings contained in Zoning Ordinance Sections 59-7.2.1.E and the approval of the Conditional Use satisfies the required findings in Zoning Ordinance Section 59-7.3.1.E.

## **II. REPORTS INTENDED TO BE INTRODUCED AT THE HEARING**

1. Land Use Report; and
2. Traffic Statement prepared by MHG.

These reports have already been submitted into the record in connection with the LMA Applications.

## **III. SUMMARY OF EXPERT TESTIMONY**

At the present time, the Applicant intends to call the following expert witnesses to testify in support of the rezoning application:

1. Patrick La Vay, Civil Engineer with MHG will testify as to among other things the physical characteristics of the Property, the Natural Resources Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation Plan of the Property, the proposed Floating Zone Plan, the proposed Conditional Use Plan, and the proposed storm water management concept plan for the redevelopment of the Property. Patrick La Vay will also testify regarding the structure's compliance with the applicable standards and requirements of the Zoning Ordinance; the Traffic Statement prepared for the Local Map Amendment and Conditional Use; and the Project's substantial conformance with the Sector Plan and compatibility with surrounding area.
2. Rebekah Brown, with bwdarchitects, will testify as to the architectural and design elements of the Project.

The resumes of the above identified expert witnesses are attached (*see Exhibit 1*). The Applicant reserves the right to call additional expert witnesses if it deems necessary.

## **IV. OTHER WITNESSES WHO WILL TESTIFY**

In addition to the above expert witnesses, the Applicant may also have the following witness testify:

1. Steve Cratin, Vice President of Development and Construction, Arcland.

**V. ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED FOR PRESENTATION**

It is estimated that three (3) hours will be required for the Applicant to present its case in chief.

This submission is intended to satisfy the requirement of the Rules of Procedure for Zoning Cases. If it is subsequently determined that new or supplemental information is necessary, the Applicant will make a supplemental submission in a timely fashion.

Respectfully submitted,

By:   
Elizabeth C. Rogers

# Exhibit 1

**PATRICK G. LA VAY, P.E.**

**TITLE:** Vice President / Senior Project Engineer

**EXPERTISE:** Civil Engineering, Land Planning and Project Management Relating to Development Projects in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

**EXPERIENCE WITH MACRIS, HENDRICKS AND GLASCOCK, P.A.**

(2009 - Present):

- Principal Project Engineer in charge of managing commercial, institutional, and industrial projects under design by Macris, Hendricks and Glascock, P.A. Responsibilities include: project coordination and scheduling, plan and specification preparation and review, development application and permit processing, LEED Certification and construction administration.

(2007 – 2009)

- Design Engineer in charge of the design of Stormwater Management & Storm Drainage Systems and Soil Erosion/Sediment Control Plans. Responsibilities included feasibility investigations, plan and specification preparation, and construction administration.

**ACADEMIC BACKGROUND:**

- B.S., Virginia Tech (2005) – Mining and Minerals Engineering
- Phi Sigma Theta National Honors Society

**PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION:**

- Professional Engineer, State of Maryland
- Professional Engineer, District of Columbia
- Professional Engineer, Commonwealth of Virginia

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

- American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Member

**EXPERIENCE AS EXPERT WITNESS:**

- Office of Zoning Hearing Examiner for Montgomery County, Maryland
  - Special Exception Case No. S-2819, Olney Assisted Living
  - Special Exception Case No. S-2820, Fairland Animal Hospital
  - Special Exception Case No. S-2815 Alfredhouse Eldercare, Inc.
  - Special Exception Case No. S-687-G, Bullis School
  - Conditional Use Case No. CU 15-05 Artis Senior Living, Potomac
  - Local Map Amendment Case No. H-118, Georgetown Professional Associates
- Montgomery County Department of Transportation
  - Abandonment/Disposition of Water Johnson Road, Germantown, AB-779
- Frederick County Board of Appeals
  - Special Exception Case No. B-14-17, Kelkimric Properties

**AWARDS AND HONORS:**

- Shelton Award for Academic Achievement in Engineering – Class of 2005
- Maryland National Capital Building Industry Association, 2011 Environmental Award – Watkins Mill High School, Regenerative Storm Drain Outfall Restoration Project

**PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATION**

**I. BASIC INFORMATION**

A. Education History

1. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Bachelor of Architecture, Cum Laude 2008

B. Active Architectural License Registrations:

1. MD, DC, VA, DE, FL

C. Professional Affiliations

1. NCARB, ICC, SSA

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- A. At **bwdarchitects inc.**, a professional architectural services firm founded in 1989 and based in Falls Church, Virginia, Rebekah is one of four partners. She has been involved in hundreds of storage facility projects ranging from 20,000 to 200,000 SF, including new construction, additions, renovations/conversions and mixed use. Rebekah has shepherded projects from initial site plan, through entitlement approvals, building permitting and construction. She has assisted projects across the country, served as Senior Project Manager, and held the position Architect of Record (AOR) on multiple projects along the east coast.

**III. RELEVANT PROJECTS**

- A. *The following Projects are representative of the Architect's recent work applicable to this project.*
1. Nicholson Ct. Self Storage, Montgomery County, MD - 143,000 SF
  2. Shirlington II Self Storage, Arlington County, VA - 128,000 SF
  3. Sussex Self Storage, Sussex County, DE - 130,000 SF
  4. West Ox Self Storage, Fairfax County, VA - 120,000 SF
  5. Dixie Highway Self Storage, Miami-Dade County, FL - 117,000 SF
  6. Suitland Self Storage, Prince George's County, MD - 110,000 SF
  7. Bel Air Self Storage, Howard County, MD - 110,000 SF

**IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

A. Speaking/Panelist Engagements:

1. George Mason Center for Real Estate Entrepreneurship: Repurposing Obsolete Office Buildings— Dec 2022
2. AIA Symposium: Demystifying Density— Feb 2020