



APPLICATION ACCEPTED: March 31, 2006  
PLANNING COMMISSION: July 19, 2006  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: July 31, 2006 @ 4:00 pm

# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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July 5, 2006

## STAFF REPORT

APPLICATION SEA 01-M-017

# CRD

MASON DISTRICT

**APPLICANT:** Arlington Virginia Federal Credit Union

**ZONING:** C-8, CRD, HC, SC

**LOCATION:** 5666 Columbia Pike

**PARCEL(S):** 61-2 ((1)) 83, 84, 84A

**ACREAGE:** 1.58 acres

**FAR:** 0.43

**OPEN SPACE:** 24%

**PLAN MAP:** Retail & Other

**SE CATEGORY:** Category 6; Drive-in Bank (credit union) in a Highway Corridor Overlay District

**PROPOSAL:** To delete the approve SE use of vehicle sale, rental, and ancillary service (approved under SE 01-M-017) and approve a drive-in bank, to allow the development of a financial institution (credit union) with drive-through windows and additional ground floor spaces for retail or other C-8 by-right, non-residential uses.

Modification of transitional screening and barrier requirements along the north and northeast property boundaries, in favor of that shown on the SE Plat.

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### Department of Planning and Zoning

Zoning Evaluation Division  
12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 801  
Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5509  
Phone 703 324-1290  
FAX 703 324-3924  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/)

**WAIVERS & MODIFICATIONS:  
REQUESTED:**

Waiver of the Service Drive Requirement along  
Columbia Pike

Modification of loading space requirement from two  
spaces to one space

Modification of Commercial Revitalization Streetscape  
requirements in favor of that shown on the SE Plat

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends denial of SEA 01-M-017 as submitted. If it is the intent of the Board of Supervisors to approve the application, staff recommends that such approval be subject to the proposed development conditions contained in Appendix 1.

It should be noted that it is not the intent of the staff to recommend that the Board, in adopting any conditions, relieve the applicant/owner from compliance with the provisions of any applicable ordinances, regulations, or adopted standards.

It should be further noted that the content of this report reflects the analysis and recommendation of staff; it does not reflect the position of the Board of Supervisors.

For information, contact the Zoning Evaluation Division, Department of Planning and Zoning, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 801, Fairfax, Virginia 22035-5505, (703) 324-1290 or TTY 711 (Virginia Relay Center).



**A GLOSSARY OF TERMS FREQUENTLY  
USED IN STAFF REPORTS MAY BE  
FOUND AT THE BACK OF THIS REPORT**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION**

**Proposal:** The applicant is seeking a special exception to permit a drive through bank (credit union) in a highway corridor overlay district. The application will also remove the currently approved SE use on the site, for vehicle sales, rental, and ancillary service approved in the name of Enterprise Rent-a-car under SE 01-M-017.

A multi-story building (three stories on the north side, four stories on the south side) consisting of a financial institution (by-right in the C-8 District) with drive through windows (necessitating an SE) with retail (or other by-right C-8 uses) on the ground floor.

**Hours:** *Lobby:* 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday – Friday and 9:00 am to 12 noon Saturday  
*Drive-through windows:* 9:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday – Friday and 9:00 am to 12 noon Saturday;  
*Automated Teller Machines (ATM):* 24 hours a day, seven days a week

**Employees:** Approximately 75 full-time employees

**Patrons:** Approximately 250 customers per day

**Requested Waivers/Modifications:**

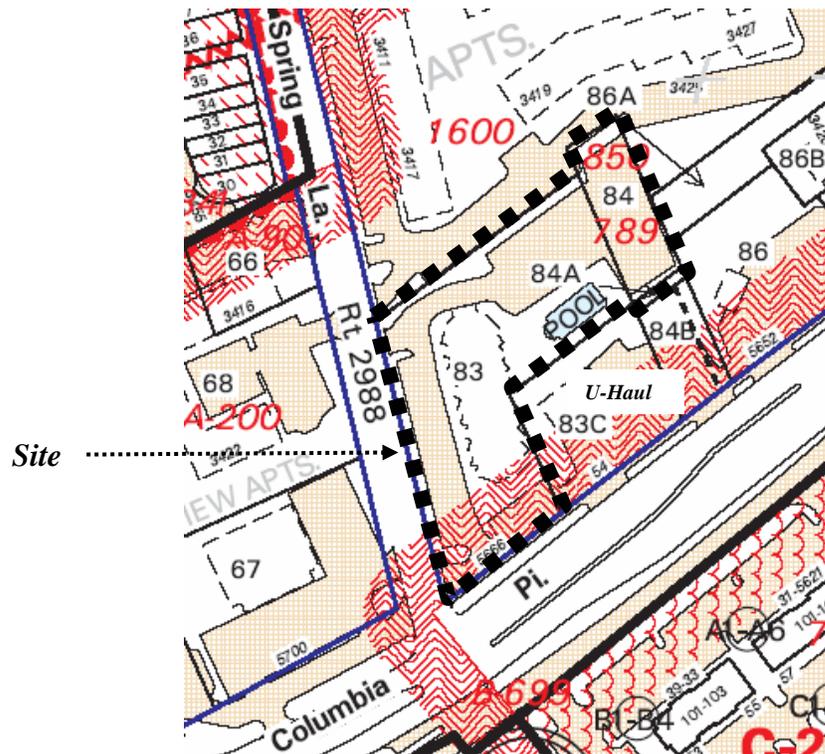
- Waiver of service drive requirement along Columbia Pike
- Modification of loading space requirements; two required, one provided
- Modification of Commercial Revitalization District streetscape requirements along Spring Lane and Columbia Pike, in favor of that shown on the SE Plat
- Modification of transitional screening and barrier requirements along the north and northeast property boundaries, in favor of that shown on the SE Plat

## LOCATION AND CHARACTER

### Site Description:

The application property is located at 5666 Columbia Pike, in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Columbia Pike and Spring Lane. The site is currently developed with a three to four story motel (circa 1961), which includes a vehicle rental establishment, and is to be demolished with the proposed redevelopment. The existing hotel has an FAR of 1.0, and a height of approximately 36.5 feet (4 stories) as measured on the Columbia Pike end and 25.5 feet (3 stories) on the north end of the building, adjacent to the residential use to the north. Access to the site is currently provided by two entrances on Spring Lane and a service drive along Columbia Pike, which is located in an easement on the property (not dedicated right-of-way). The site has a significant amount of impervious surface.

The application property consists of three parcels (all of which are currently under use for the aforementioned hotel). The site is "L" shaped, as shown below, with the short leg of the site fronting Spring Lane and Columbia Pike, and the longer leg extending behind the U-Haul facility (on Columbia Pike).



**Surrounding Area Description:**

<b>SURROUNDING AREA DESCRIPTION</b>			
<b>Direction</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Plan</b>
<b>North</b>	Multi-family residential (Fairfax County RHA)	C-8, CRD	Retail and Office
<b>South</b>	Professional Offices	C-2, CRD	Office
<b>East</b>	Truck Rental (U-Haul)	C-8, CRD	Retail and Office
<b>West</b>	Multi-family residential Retail	C-8, CRD	Retail and Office

**BACKGROUND**

As noted, the property is currently developed with a motel, dating from 1961 (prior to the adoption of the current Zoning Ordinance).

An Enterprise Rent-a-Car facility began operating from the hotel in December 2000, with no Special Exception approval.

SE 01-M-017 was approved by the Board of Supervisors on August 6, 2001, to allow a vehicle sales, rental and ancillary service establishment (the Enterprise operation) to legally continue operation. (See Appendix 4)

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROVISIONS**

- Plan Area:** Area I
- Planning District:** Baileys
- Planning Sector:** Baileys Crossroads Community Business Center Land Unit B-4
- Plan Map:** Retail and Other
- Plan Text:**

“This sub-unit includes those parcels fronting on Spring Lane and extends along Columbia Pike to the Arlington County boundary. It is planned for and developed with neighborhood-serving retail and office uses fronting on Columbia Pike and multi-family residential uses to the north and along the Arlington County line. ... Together with the garden apartments at 5565 Columbia Pike, parcels west of Carlyn Hill Drive are designated as gateway locations.

As an option, office use with ground floor retail up to .50 FAR may be appropriate for those parcels fronting on Columbia Pike between Spring Lane and Carlyn Hill Drive provided that two or more parcels are consolidated, access points to Columbia Pike are

minimized, access to redeveloped parcels is provided via median breaks, and pedestrian linkages to adjacent commercial uses are provided. As a transition to adjacent residential uses, building height should be limited to 40 feet and an effective landscape buffer to the adjacent multi-family housing provided.”

*See Appendix 5 for additional Plan text.*

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Special Exception (SE) Plat** (copy at front of staff report)

*Title of SE Plat:* Arlington Virginia Federal Credit Union  
*Prepared By:* Dewberry & Davis, LLC  
*Date:* March 6, 2006, with revisions through May 30, 2006

#### ***Plat Description:***

The SE Plat consists of six sheets.

**Sheet 1** is a cover sheet, including a vicinity map and a sheet index.

**Sheet 2** shows the proposed layout of the site, along with notes and tabulations, an angle of bulk plane diagram, and a detail of the underground parking area.

**Sheets 3 & 4** provide the stormwater narrative, computations, and map of drainage divides.

**Sheet 5** provides architectural elevations of the proposed building, along with a depiction of the proposed monument sign.

**Sheet 6** cross-sections through the two axes of the site.

#### **Buildings & Uses:**

The SE Plat proposes the construction of a 29,476 square foot building, which will be set into the grade on the site so that the northern side of the building will be three-stories, while the southern side will be four stories. The building is set at the corner of the “L” shaped parcel, with the short end facing Spring Lane and long side facing Columbia Pike, but partially concealed behind the adjacent U-Haul facility.

The elevations provided in the SE Plat show a flat-roofed building with a small parapet wall, and an elevated element on three sides (over the doors in the north and south faces as well as on the western face). These elements, as measured from the SE Plat, are 17.6 feet wide with a 22.4 foot wide roof on the north and west faces, and 19.2 feet wide with a 24 foot wide roof on the south face. As shown on the elevations,

all three of these elements extend an additional 8 feet 4 inches above the roof, and as such would be considered in measuring height, according to the Zoning Ordinance.

Building materials or colors are neither provided nor committed to, although the elevations appear to show brick or masonry facing the ground level (retail) and the lower part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> level (first bank level).

The credit union (considered to be a financial institution, a by-right use in the C-8 District) is proposed for the upper three floors of the building (26,790 square feet). A four-lane drive through facility is proposed as a detached canopy structure on the eastern side of the building (behind the U-Haul). The bottom floor (facing Columbia Pike) includes 2,686 square feet to be divided between two or three "retail" tenants. The SE Plat contains no commitment to or restriction on the number or type of tenants or uses, which therefore could be any use allowed by-right in the C-8 District. It should also be noted that slightly more than a third of the first floor building face will be a garage entrance to the underground parking.

#### Drive-through "Window" Lanes:

The drive-through window canopy is detached from the building (served by a tube system). Four drive through lanes are provided (at least one will also have a drive-up ATM), as is a by-pass lane. An additional ATM will be located in a walk-up location on the exterior of the building (not shown). The drive through canopy is not shown in the elevations, but is shown in the cross-sections on Sheet 6, and is indicated to be 21 feet 7 inches in height. The plan view of the site shows the free-standing canopy to be 34 feet long and 55 feet wide.

#### Access, Circulation & Parking

The applicant proposes to remove the service drive along Columbia Pike, and provide access to Columbia Pike through an interparcel access to the east (the U-Haul site), which allows right-in, right-out access from Columbia Pike. The existing service drive is in an easement, and therefore does not require vacation; however, the applicant should demonstrate that the existing easement on the service drive has been vacated; staff has proposed such a development condition.

In addition to access from Columbia Pike, the application proposes to slightly relocate the two existing entrances from Spring Lane; both would offer full access to the site.

Parking areas on the site include the following: (1) surface parking in front of the ground floor retail spaces (along Columbia Pike); (2) one level of underground parking under the building and a portion of the parking lot (access from the front, facing Columbia Pike); and (3) surface parking to the rear (north) of the building, between the building and the adjacent residential uses. Parking is provided to meet the Article 11 standards, without utilizing the up to 20% parking reduction offered in the Commercial Revitalization Districts.

It should be noted that the SE Plat indicates that the upper floors are parked as a “financial institution” while the ground floor retail is parked as a “shopping center.” While the development as a whole may meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of a “shopping center” as currently proposed, a single building cannot be both uses. If the entire development is parked as a shopping center, additional parking is needed (as the shopping center parking rate exceeds the financial institution rate). If the building is parked by use (financial institution and other ground floor uses), the parking requirement will be determined by the types of uses provided, and may (if all retail is provided) require additional parking. Staff has proposed a development condition requiring the applicant to provide parking tabulations prior to the issuance of any Non-residential Use Permit.

Circulation on the site is relatively convoluted; a one-way travel aisle gives access from the front parking areas (including the underground parking and the Columbia Pike access point) to the rear, but not the reverse. Access to the drive-through window lanes is provided by driving through the rear parking lot, U-turning towards the building, then exiting back through the parking lot (to the northernmost Spring Lane access point only).

#### *Pedestrian Connections*

An existing sidewalk along Columbia Pike is proposed to remain; the applicant proposes to install a five-foot wide sidewalk along the Spring Lane frontage of the site. Internal sidewalks are shown along all faces of the proposed building except the portion that directly abuts the U-Haul site to the south. Crosswalks are shown from the site frontages (two on Spring Lane, one on Columbia Pike) to the building. An additional crosswalk shows a “potential” connection from the adjacent residential to the north; however, the proposed 9 foot wide buffer would be unlikely to accommodate an appropriate pedestrian connection, as the adjacent property is six feet higher than the subject site.

#### *Stormwater Management / BMPs*

Because the site is a redevelopment site, and is only increasing the impervious surface by an extremely small amount, little stormwater management would be required. However, because the demolition of the existing site and construction of an entirely new structure will entail significant disturbance of the site, it is appropriate to attempt to improve the SWM / BMP situation, rather than just maintain the status quo. The applicant has therefore, at staff’s request, proposed two Filterra water filtration devices as underground water quality controls on the site.

#### *Open Space & Landscaping*

As noted, the existing service drive along Columbia Pike will be removed with construction, and replaced with a lawn area. A row of four or five deciduous trees with understory shrubs will be located along the parking lot in this area, fronting on Columbia Pike. Additional (young) deciduous trees were planted in the right-of-way along the sidewalk as part of the County’s Columbia Pike Streetscape project.

Along Spring Lane, the applicant proposes a ten foot wide landscaping strip planted with shade trees and smaller ornamentals. This landscape strip will be inside (on the building side) of the five foot wide sidewalk.

Along the northern and northeastern boundaries of the site (abutting the adjacent multi-family residential uses) the applicant proposes a combination of a retaining wall and a minimal (9 foot wide) planted buffer. Along the northern boundary, adjacent the virtually unscreened parking for the residential, the application proposes a six foot high wall on the property line (with the bank use on the lower side) and the screening on the bank's side of the wall. Along the northeastern side, adjacent to a vegetated open space area for the residential, the nine foot wide screening strip is provided (on the applicant's side) and an undefined "barrier." It is unclear from the SE Plat how the six foot wall from the northern side will transition through this area, but grades would suggest that, at some point, the application site and the adjacent property would be at the same grade.

An additional retaining wall is shown along the southeastern side of the site adjacent to the U-Haul (north of the interparcel access). No screening or barrier is required along this boundary. This wall (with the bank on the high side) is noted to be from 0.5 to 8.5 feet in height.

### **Land Use Analysis** (Appendix 5)

#### ***Issue:*** *Comprehensive Plan Guidance*

The Comprehensive Plan indicates that the subject property may be appropriate for office use with ground floor retail up to a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.50, if the following conditions are addressed:

- Two or more parcels are consolidated;
- Access points to Columbia Pike are minimized
- Access to redeveloped parcels is provided via median breaks;
- Pedestrian linkages to adjacent commercial uses are provided;
- Building height is limited to 40 feet as a transition to adjacent residential uses; and
- An effective landscape buffer to the adjacent multi-family housing is provided.

In staff's evaluation, this proposal does not satisfy all of these conditions.

The application does maintain the consolidation of three parcels and the existing pattern of access points; however, the Comprehensive Plan language specifically calls for transition to be provided to adjacent residential uses through limitation on building height and the provision of an "effective landscape buffer."

The majority of the face of the building facing the residential has a flat roof with a height of 40 feet plus a 3 foot parapet wall. This would meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of a maximum height of 40 feet, as the Zoning Ordinance allows a parapet

wall of up to 3 feet to extend above a flat roof without being counted towards the height. The element over the door, however, extends 8.3 feet above the roof. In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance definition, this element *would* be included in the height measurement. In staff's opinion, the Comprehensive Plan limitation on building height (40 feet) must be in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance definition, which would allow the three foot parapet but not the 8.3 foot element. Therefore, this bullet is not met. Staff has proposed a development condition which would limit the height to 40 feet (plus the parapet) and would not allow the extra 8.3 foot element.

The minimum Zoning Ordinance requirement for transitional screening and buffering between the proposed use and the adjacent residential uses is a landscaped buffer yard of 35 feet with a barrier on the bank's side of the buffer consisting of a six foot high fence or wall. The SE Plat shows a six foot high wall which, according to the cross-sections, appears to be located on the top of a retaining wall of up to 6 feet in height (resulting in a 12 foot high masonry wall as seen from the application property). Below the wall is buffer strip only 9 feet in width (and apparently located 12 feet below the top of the wall/retaining wall). This combination of minimal buffer and wall/retaining wall does not provide "effective buffering" for the residential use. While it is difficult to generalize growth rates across species, and the applicant has not provided specifics on plant types or sizes, it is clear that, assuming the plants meet the PFM standards at the time of planting, the proposed "buffer" will not top the wall/retaining wall combination for at least 4 to 6 years, providing no visual screening during that time. Even after the proposed trees top the wall, the minimal width of the buffer strip will provide very little screening and will not be sensitive to the residential use, as appropriate.

Furthermore, the orientation of the building, with surface parking in the front to serve the small retail component, does not seem to adequately serve as a "gateway." Reorienting the building as discussed below, and relocating all parking to the rear or underground could provide a better "gateway" by providing an attractive building with landscaping as the front to Columbia Pike.

These issues have not been resolved.

***Issue: Design***

As noted, the subject property is designated as a "gateway" for the Baileys Crossroads area. Furthermore, the site has an awkward shape and a pronounced grade. To address concerns such as these, the Commercial Revitalization districts offer a smaller front yard (both to ease development restrictions on tight sites and to promote an urban design with building directly fronting the street, rather than set back behind parking). The applicant is not taking advantage of the reduced front yards (20 feet, rather than 40 feet), but instead provides a building with parking on the Columbia Pike frontage and a travel aisle on the Spring Lane frontage. Furthermore, the proposed orientation of the building and parking preclude the creation of an acceptable, "effective" buffer to the residential to the north.

In staff's opinion, a number of options exist to address these design deficiencies. The proposed building could be re-oriented so that the long side faces Spring Lane and the short side faces Columbia Pike, in a configuration more like the existing hotel. This would free additional space for improvements to the parking and access, and would reduce the impact of the new, larger building on the residential to the north. Other options would include moving the building closer to Columbia Pike and deleting the parking in the front; deleting the request for the minimal "retail" space on the ground floor (which would remove the need for the surface parking in the front of the building); or providing an additional level of underground parking and deleting a corresponding amount of surface parking.

***Issue: "Retail" Space***

The application includes provision of ground floor "retail" space fronting on Columbia Pike, with notations that this will be considered a "shopping center." As noted earlier, for parking purposes, the development may either be considered a "shopping center" when considered as a whole or parked separately, but it is not appropriate to consider only one portion (and a minor portion) of a building as a "shopping center" without including the entire building.

Additionally, the total floor area allocated to this retail space is 2,686 square feet, an area smaller than a standard fast food pad. The applicant has verbally indicated that as many as three separate lease spaces may be created. This would result in a small number (two or three) of very small stores – averaging 800 to 1,400 square feet. Staff is concerned that such development would not be viable, and would not develop as envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan recommendations for "ground floor retail."

**Transportation Analysis (Appendix 6)**

The following issues have not been fully addressed.

***Issue: Underground Parking***

The proposed underground parking is one-way in, one-way out. No turn around space is provided for cars at the far end of the garage. The applicant should delete the last space on each side in the garage, to facilitate movement in the garage and eliminate the potential need for backing out the length of the garage. Staff has proposed such a condition.

***Issue: Entrances***

The proposed entrances to the site should be a minimum of 30 feet in width. Staff has proposed such a condition.

**Issue:** *Turning Radius on Columbia Pike*

Staff is concerned about the turning radius from westbound Columbia Pike to northbound Spring Lane. This radius should be, at most, a 35 foot radius. Staff has proposed such a condition.

**Issue:** *Stacking Spaces*

The Zoning Ordinance requires that, for drive in banks with multiple drive through windows, the first window be provided with eight stacking spaces, and the second window with two spaces, or that each of the first two windows provide five stacking spaces each along with a commitment that a minimum of two windows will be open at any time any windows are open. The SE Plat shows an ATM lane and three window lanes. The illustration depicts three cars in each lane. While it appears that there is sufficient space to provide for stacking in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements, the applicant should demonstrate such on the SE Plat.

**Environmental Analysis** (Appendix 5)

The application exceeds the requirements for open space and tree cover, which is a considerable improvement over existing conditions. While little or no stormwater management would be required for by-right development, it is appropriate for the applicant to include measures to improve the site above existing conditions, given that the site is a total redevelopment. The applicant has therefore proposed two underground water filtration devices, which will be assessed at the time of site plan approval.

**Issue:** *Commercial Revitalization District Streetscape*

This issue will be addressed below in the Waivers and Modifications section of this staff report.

**ZONING ORDINANCE PROVISIONS**

<b>BULK REGULATIONS (C-8 District, CRD)</b>		
<b>Standard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Provided</b>
Lot Size	40,000 square feet	1.58 acres
Lot Width	200 feet	294 feet (Spring Lane) 157 feet (Columbia Pike)
Max. Building Height	50 feet	48 feet <sup>1</sup>
Front Yard	20 feet	40 feet (Spring Lane) 115 feet (Columbia Pike)
Rear Yard	20 feet	161 feet
FAR	0.50	0.43
Open Space	15%	24%

<b>BULK REGULATIONS (C-8 District, CRD)</b>		
<b>Standard</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Provided</b>
Parking	110 spaces <sup>2</sup>	112 spaces <sup>3</sup>
Loading Spaces	2	1 (modification requested)
Stacking Spaces	8 / 2 (first/second window) or 5 / 5	3 per lane illustrated (space appears sufficient for 5 spaces per lane)
<b>Transitional Screening &amp; Barrier:</b>		
<b>North and Northeast</b>	35 feet of screening and a 6 foot wall or fence on the application property's side of the buffer	9 feet of screening and a 6 foot wall on top of a retaining wall (not on the application property's side of the buffer)

1. per the SE Plat tabulations; the applicant has provided some documentation of how the height complies with the Zoning Ordinance definition of height, but has not provided the necessary depiction of average grade needed for staff to confirm the accuracy of the height measurements.
2. Not including permissible CRD reduction (up to 20%)
3. Note that staff's proposed development conditions would delete 2 spaces in the garage, reducing this to 110 spaces

**Waivers and Modifications Requested**

- Waiver of service drive requirement along Columbia Pike
- Modification of loading space requirements (two required, one provided)
- Modification of Commercial Revitalization District streetscape requirements along Spring Lane and Columbia Pike, in favor of that shown on the SE Plat
- Modification of transitional screening and barrier requirements along the north and northeast property boundaries, in favor of that shown on the SE Plat

Waiver of service drive requirement along Columbia Pike

Columbia Pike is designated as a principal arterial roadway. In accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, all primary highways must be served by an adjacent and parallel service drive, unless this requirement is waived. The applicant proposes to remove and existing service drive, constructed in an easement on the application property. Because this service drive only offers access the adjacent U-Haul, and because the applicant has shown a public access easement across the frontage of the site, connecting the interparcel access to the U-Haul with the access to Spring Lane. With the dedication of this public access easement, staff would not object to this waiver.

Loading Space

The applicant requests a waiver of the loading space requirement. The SE Plat indicates that the Zoning Ordinance requires that 2 loading spaces be provided (if the financial institution and the retail spaces are considered separately, then 3 spaces would be required). The applicant states that experience with similar buildings

indicates that a single loading space is sufficient for their needs. Staff is concerned that sufficient details about the usage of the small retail space (which could include up to three units, including an eating establishment or a fast food restaurant) have not been provided to determine if adequate receiving facilities are provided on site with a single loading space. Additionally, because of the awkward nature of circulation on the site, staff is concerned that, should one loading space be insufficient, circulation on the site might be compromised by additional vehicles parked in small parking spaces or in travel aisles. Therefore, staff cannot support this request at this time.

#### Streetscape requirements

The Baileys/Seven Corners Commercial Revitalization District includes a requirement for streetscape as shown in the Comprehensive Plan, which would require a five foot wide landscape strip on either side of a five foot wide sidewalk. In order to provide a wider, more viable landscape area, the applicant proposes a five foot wide sidewalk adjacent to Spring Lane, with a ten foot wide landscape strip planted with a mixture of shade and ornamental trees between the sidewalk and the travel aisle. As this will enhance the survivability of these plantings, staff does not object to the modification along Spring Lane.

Along Columbia Pike, an existing brick paver sidewalk was installed with the Columbia Pike Streetscape project, as were a row of shade trees. The SE Plat shows the existing service drive to be removed and replaced with lawn area, with trees placed along the parking. Staff believes that additional vegetation could and should be placed in this area to enhance the streetscape, especially as the sidewalk will remain directly adjacent to Columbia Pike. A development condition directing that additional landscaping be provided has been proposed.

#### Transitional screening and barrier along the north and northeast property boundaries

As noted, the application would require transitional screening amounting to a 35 foot wide buffer and a six foot high wall or fence. The applicant proposes a six foot high masonry wall; however, such wall would not be located in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements, but instead would be located on the property line. (The Zoning Ordinance requires that the landscaping be located on the side of the use to be screened.) The SE Plat only shows a nine foot wide landscaping strip. As explained earlier in this report, staff does not believe that the proposed screening is sufficient and therefore staff does not support the requested modification. It should be noted that, as the application is located in a commercial revitalization district, staff is not opposed to a more reasonable modification, so long as the adjacent residential use is appropriately screened by "effective buffer," as required by the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Special Exception Requirements (Appendix 8)**

#### General Special Exception Standards (Sect. 9-006)

General Standard 1 requires that the proposed use at the specified location be in harmony with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The Plan recommends an option for

office and retail use on this property up to a maximum FAR of 0.50 with conditions. However, as noted in the Land Use Analysis, staff does not believe the application has met the conditions of the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, this Standard has not been met.

General Standard 2 requires that the proposed use be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the applicable zoning district regulations. The C-8 District was established to provide locations on heavily traveled collector and arterial highways for those commercial and service uses which are oriented to the automobile. The proposal to construct a drive-through bank along Columbia Pike is not inconsistent with these goals; however, the current proposal is not in conformance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements relating to transitional screening and barrier, and to loading spaces. Therefore, barring appropriate resolution of the outstanding issues, this Standard has not been met. Additionally, the applicant did not include a demonstration of compliance with the height limitation on the SE Plat. Such demonstration has recently been provided under separate cover, but at this time has not been reviewed by staff to ensure that the calculations have been done correctly.

General Standard 3 requires that the proposed use be harmonious with and not adversely affect the use or development of neighboring properties in accordance with applicable zoning district regulations and the adopted Comprehensive Plan. It further states that the location, size and height of buildings, structures, walls and fences, and the nature and extent of screening, buffering and landscaping shall be such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent or nearby land and/or buildings or impair the value thereof. While it is true that redevelopment would result in additional landscaping on this site, staff remains extremely concerned that the buffer provided, on the downhill side of a combination wall/retaining wall that might be as much as 12 feet high, is not harmonious with, and does not sufficiently screen the adjacent residential uses, and will adversely affect the adjacent residential properties. Therefore, this Standard has not been satisfied.

General Standard 4 requires that the proposed use be such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic associated with such use will not be hazardous or conflict with the existing and anticipated traffic in the neighborhood. While there are improvements that could be made to the circulation on the application property, with the imposition of the proposed development conditions addressing these issues (in lieu of the applicant revising the SE Plat to address these minor issues), staff does not believe that circulation in the surrounding development will be harmed. This Standard has been met.

General Standards 5, 6, 7 and 8 require that landscaping, screening, open space, adequate utility, drainage, signage, parking and loading spaces be regulated in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance; however, the Board of Supervisors may impose more strict requirements for a given use than those set forth in the Ordinance. As noted, staff does not support the requested modifications to transitional screening and barriers. Therefore, this Standard has not been satisfied.

*Provisions for Approving...Drive-In Banks...in a Highway Corridor Overlay District (Sect. 9-611)*

The Board may approve a special exception for the establishment of a drive-in bank in a Highway Corridor Overlay District, but only in accordance with the provisions of Part 6 of Article 7.

*Highway Corridor Overlay District Use Limitations (Sect. 7-608)*

Paragraph 1A requires that such a use shall be designed so that pedestrian and vehicular circulation is coordinated with that on adjacent properties. As previously discussed, the applicant will replace an existing service drive with an interparcel access and a public access easement. Sidewalks are provided on all frontages and into the site from those frontages. With implementation of the development conditions, this standard will have been met.

Paragraph 1B requires that such a use shall have access designed so not to impede traffic on a public street intended to carry through traffic. The SE Plat depicts access to the site via two entrances on Spring Lane and the interparcel access offering right-in, right-out access to Columbia Pike. While on-site circulation is awkward, staff does not believe that off-site circulation will be impacted, therefore this standard is satisfied.

Paragraph 1C requires that there shall be no outdoor storage or display of goods offered for sale. While the applicant has not provided or committed to any particular number or type of uses for the retail spaces, with implementation of the development conditions, this standard will have been met.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

The proposal for a financial institution (credit union) with drive-through windows and a small amount of first floor retail, while potentially viable on this site, faces design constraints forced by the oddly shaped parcel and the lack of additional available land for consolidation. The design as proposed does not meet the Comprehensive Plan recommendations for an “effective buffer” to the adjacent residential uses. The proposed retail is questionable in terms of viability (the entire space – proposed for up to three users – includes less floor area than a standard fast food restaurant). Options to reduce parking (by deleting the “retail” uses), increase buffering, or re-orient the building to address design and buffering concerns have not been implemented. Finally, staff does not believe that the SE Plat correctly categories the proposed uses on the site in order to determine, and provide, adequate parking. Staff also believes that when the uses are shown correctly, the parking will not meet the requirements of Article 11, requiring either a reduction in uses or a request for a CRD parking reduction. Should such a parking reduction be proposed, it would be appropriate for it to be reviewed now, in conjunction with the subject SE application. Therefore, in

staff's opinion, the application, as proposed, is not in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan or the applicable Zoning Ordinance provisions.

### **Recommendations**

Staff recommends denial of SEA 01-M-017. If it is the intent of the Board of Supervisors to approve the application, staff recommends that such approval be subject to the proposed development conditions contained in Appendix 1.

It should be noted that it is not the intent of Staff to recommend that the Board of Supervisors, in adopting any conditions proffered by the owner, relieve the applicant/owner from compliance with the provisions of any applicable ordinances, regulations, or adopted standards.

It should be further noted that the content of this report reflects the analysis and recommendations of Staff; it does not reflect the position of the Board of Supervisors.

### **APPENDICES**

1. Proposed Development Conditions
2. Affidavit
3. Statement of Justification
4. Approval of SE 01-M-017
5. Comprehensive Plan and Environmental Analysis
6. Transportation Analysis
7. Stormwater Management Analysis
8. Applicable Zoning Ordinance Provisions
9. Glossary of Terms

## DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS

### SEA 01-M-017

July 5, 2006

If it is the intent of the Board of Supervisors to approve SEA 01-M-017 located at 5666 Columbia Pike (Tax Map 61-2 ((1)) 83, 84, 84A) to permit a drive-in bank (credit union) pursuant to Section 7-607 of the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance, staff recommends that the Board condition the approval by requiring conformance with the following development conditions, which supersede all previously approved conditions.

1. This Special Exception is granted for and runs with the land indicated in this application and is not transferable to other land.
2. This Special Exception is granted only for the purpose(s), structure(s), and/or use(s) indicated on the Special Exception Plat (SE Plat) approved with this application, as qualified by these development conditions. By-right or special permit uses (except as excluded by these conditions) may be permitted on the property without a Special Exception Amendment, so long as such uses can be parked and are in substantial conformance with the SE plat.
3. This Special Exception is subject to the provisions of Article 17, Site Plans, as may be determined by the Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES). Any plan submitted pursuant to this Special Exception shall be in substantial conformance with the approved SE Plat entitled "Arlington Virginia Federal Credit Union" prepared by Dewberry & Davis, LLC, consisting of 6 sheets, dated March 6, 2006, with revisions through May 30, 2006. Minor modifications to the approved Special Exception may be permitted pursuant to Par. 4 of Sect. 9-004 of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. Architecture shall be in substantial conformance with that shown on Sheet 5 of the SE Plat, except as conditioned below. The lowest floor, and the lower part of the second floor, shall be faced with brick, as depicted (but not labeled) on the elevations on Sheet 5 of the SE Plat.
5. All roof top equipment shall be screened from sight from the adjacent public streets and adjacent Tax Map Parcel 61-2 ((1)) 85, using materials that are the same as those used in the building.
6. Prior to site plan approval, the applicant shall demonstrate to DPZ and DPWES that the proposed building meets the height requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, no point of the roof on the north face of the building (facing Tax Map Parcel 61-2 ((1)) 85) shall exceed 40 feet in height, excluding parapet walls which are no more than 3 feet in height. The element shown on the elevations extending to 48 feet 4 inches in height on the north face of the building shall not be constructed.

7. No more than one freestanding identification sign shall be permitted, which shall be a monument-style sign in substantial conformance with that shown on the SE Plat.
8. Temporary promotional banners, balloons, flags, or rooftop displays shall not be permitted on site.
9. All lighting, including security, pedestrian and/or other incidental lighting, shall meet the standards of Article 14 of the Zoning Ordinance.
10. Prior to site plan approval, a landscaping plan shall be approved by Urban Forest Management (UFM). At a minimum, landscaping shall be provided that is consistent with that depicted on the SE Plat. Additional shade trees shall be provided in the lawn area along Columbia Pike, as approved by UFM.
11. Any existing trees in the Columbia Pike right-of-way which are damaged by the removal of the service drive shall be replaced by the applicant with trees equivalent to those existing, as determined by UFM.
12. There shall be no outdoor storage or display of goods offered for sale on-site.
13. At the time of site plan approval, the existing easement for the service drive along Columbia Pike shall be vacated, and a public access easement shall be granted between the interparcel access to the property to the east [Tax Map 61-2 ((1)) 83C], and the access to Spring Lane, as shown on Sheet 3 of the SE Plat.
14. The last (easternmost) parking space on either side of the garage shall be deleted to allow for backing up or turning movements.
15. The proposed entrances to the site shall be a minimum of 30 feet in width.
16. The turning radius from westbound Columbia Pike to northbound Spring Lane shall be improved to, at most, a 35 foot radius, as approved by VDOT.
17. When any drive through window lane is open, a minimum of two windows shall be open.
18. At the time of site plan approval, the applicant shall demonstrate compliance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements for stacking spaces for the drive through windows.
19. Prior to the issuance of any Non-residential Use Permit, parking tabulations demonstrating compliance with Article 11 shall be provided to DPZ.

The above proposed conditions are staff recommendations and do not reflect the position of the Board of Supervisors unless and until adopted by that Board.

This approval, contingent on the above noted conditions, shall not relieve the applicant from compliance with the provisions of any applicable ordinances, regulations, or adopted standards. The applicant shall be himself responsible for obtaining the required Non-Residential Use Permit through established procedures, and this Special Exception shall not be valid until this has been accomplished.

Pursuant to Section 9-015 of the Zoning Ordinance, this special exception shall automatically expire, without notice, thirty (30) months after the date of approval unless, at a minimum, the use has been established or construction has commenced and been diligently prosecuted. The Board of Supervisors may grant additional time to establish the use or to commence construction if a written request for additional time is filed with the Zoning Administrator prior to the date of expiration of the special exception. The request must specify the amount of additional time requested, the basis for the amount of time requested and an explanation of why additional time is required.