§ 267-61. MO Mixed Office District.

A. Purpose. The MO District is designed to promote major economic development opportunities, including corporate offices, research and development facilities and high-tech services which create significant job opportunities and investment benefits. This area may also include retail uses to service the employment center. Designated at strategic 1-95 interchanges, development will be subject to specific performance, architectural and site design standards. Enactment of this legislation shall not serve to open the development envelope beyond those areas designated "MO" on the 2004 Harford County Master Land Use Plan.

B. Objectives.

(1) To promote a mix of corporate offices, research and development facilities, high-tech services and retail and service uses in desirable areas in the County which have a positive affect on economic development and employment.

(2) To maximize the attractiveness of and to enhance the visual appearance through preservation of significant natural features.

(3) To assure compatibility of the proposed land use with internal and surrounding uses by incorporating innovative standards of land planning and site design.

(4) To encourage pedestrian access to uses and to reduce traffic congestion by encouraging the clustering of buildings near internal streets.

C. General Regulations.

(1) Minimum lot or parcel area for the project shall be 20 acres.

FOH: We have strong reservations about allowing this intense a use on only 20 acres, and suggest at least 35 to 50 acres would be needed for a project of this scope.

NEW (2) Landscaping shall comply with requirements set forth in §267-29 (Landscaping).

NEW (3) Buffer yards shall comply with requirements set forth in §267-30 (Buffer yards).

FOH: Since this intense use is located where all adjoining properties are zoned AG, we recommend a 200 foot buffer around the perimeter of the entire property except along I-95 adjoinment. A building near the property line would require a buffer three times the height of the building. The use of berms and increased buffer areas around the MO site would retain the integrity of the rural neighborhood and the attractiveness of the area for tenants in the office complex.

NEW (4) Signage shall comply with requirements set forth in §267-33 (Signs.)

NEW (5) Lighting shall be designed and controlled so that any light shall be shaded, shielded or directed so that the light intensity or brightness, does not adversely affect the operation of vehicles or reflect into residential lots or buildings. The lighting fixtures shall be designed to assure compatibility with the building style.

(6) The project shall have direct access ~~to one or more collector~~ ARTERIAL or higher functional classification roadways as defined by the Harford County Transportation Element Plan.

FOH: We recommend limiting access to arterial roads only. The amount of volume a project of this scope will generate is too large for smaller roads to handle.

(7) The project must be served by public water and sewer service. THESE PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER LINES SHALL NOT BE EXTENDED BEYOND THE MAPPED MIXED OFFICE DISTRICT AT THIS 543/I-95 LOCATION OR ANY OTHER I-95 INTERCHANGE LOCATION WHERE THE MIXED OFFICE IS OUTSIDE THE DEVELOPMENT ENVELOPE.

FOH: We recommend this additional language.

D. Specific requirements. The following uses are permitted, subject to the additional requirements below:

(1) Minimum lot area, area per dwelling or family unit, building setback from adjacent residential lot lines, lot width, front, side and rear yard and maximum building height, as displayed in Tables 61-1 shall apply, subject to other requirements of this Part 1.

FOH: It is our position that six-story office buildings in the midst of this rural/agricultural community, outside of the development envelope, would violate the provision in the MO legislation that require specific performance,

architectural and site design standards, "to assure compatibility of the proposed land use with internal and surrounding uses by incorporating innovative standards of land planning and site design.

(2) For purposes of the MO, Mixed Office zoning district, only the following transient residential uses shall be permitted:

(a) Country inns and resorts; and

(b) Hotels and motels.

(3) Design requirements. Development in the MO District shall comply with the following regulations:

(a) Vehicular circulation.

[1] Loading and service areas shall be separated from the pedestrian and employee parking areas. Service areas shall be located away from roadways to the greatest extent possible.

[2] The internal vehicular circulation system must follow a pattern of intersection streets that provide alternative routes.

[3] Points of external access and alignments of internal roadways must facilitate use of public transit. This may include rights of way sufficient for bus pull-outs and bus shelters as well as transit easements on private streets.

[4] A comprehensive pedestrian circulation system must link all uses with the intent of minimizing walking distances and reducing dependence on the private automobile for internal travel and external access.

FOH: We note the concept plan for pedestrian use was abysmal. Path routes were through parking lots or across a median. The use of parking garages with limited retail within workers' buildings should make this requirement easier to fulfill.

(b) Parking standards.

[1] All parking areas must be effectively landscaped and buffered from adjacent roadways and adjoining residential districts, pursuant to §267-29 (Landscaping) and §267-30, (Buffer yards).

[2] Parking areas should be broken up into lots of no more than 150 cars; the lots should be separated by landscaped islands

FOH: If retail uses are subordinate to, and integrated into, the office and hotel structures, it would not only make it convenient for office tenants and hotel guests to walk to on-site retail and restaurants rather than having to drive, but it would also eliminate the need to calculate parking spaces under the retail formula. The use of parking garages should be considered if limited to the three-story height limit. Parking lots with pervious surfaces should also be considered to be more in keeping with the rural/agricultural surroundings and to enhance storm water management purposes.

[3] The number of parking spaces provided and overall design and layout of parking lots must be in accordance with § 267-26, (Off- Street Parking and Loading).

[4] No direct access to any lot is allowed from a collector or higher functional classification road as defined in the Harford County Transportation Element Plan.

[5] All access points from a parcel in the MO District shall be consolidated ~~wherever feasible~~.

FOH: To add the words, "wherever feasible" renders this regulation as useless as if the shall was replaced with the word, "should".

(c) Building design standards.

[1] An architectural rendering of the building facade and elevations of the structures shall be submitted to the Department of Planning and Zoning as part of the site plan approval process.

[2] Architecturally harmonious materials, colors, textures and treatments shall be used for all exterior walls within the MO District. All sides of the building are to be built with finish materials, including brick, natural stone and ornamental block. In no event, however, shall wood, vinyl or aluminum siding be used.

[3] Mechanical equipment should be located within the building or within a mechanical equipment penthouse. If mechanical equipment is located on the roof or is freestanding on the site, it must be effectively buffered from view by means fully compatible with the architecture. Mechanical equipment must be buffered from view from all sides.

[4] Outdoor storage is prohibited.

(d) Retail/service uses.

[1] Retail and service other than professional services and corporate office uses may be incorporated into the overall project for up 25%.

FOH: The allowable 25% of retail space cannot be calculated if it is unknown how much office space will be built. We believe that the office complex must be built before or concurrently with the retail**.** A clarification is needed as to what the 25% represents, i.e., 25% of each office building's footprint, 25% of the total square footage of office space, 25% of the total acreage of the parcel, etc., and whether or not parking lots are included in the space calculations. For example, if a shopping center and an office building have the same square footage, twice as many parking spaces are required for the shopping center as for the office building. This project as it stands now has nearly half of its "built" land surface dedicated to retail sales if parking lots are included.

[2] Retail and service uses shall not have direct access on a collector or higher functionally classified roadway.

[3] Any retail or service use ~~may~~ SHALL be incorporated as part of the office park buildings.

FOH: The original language of the bill limited retail uses in the project were intended for the tenants and employees of the complex and not the general public.

[4] Professional services and corporate office uses shall not be limited to 25% of the overall project.

FOH: This is perplexing statement. If there is no limit, there is no need to state the obvious.

(e) Open space. The MO District shall include a minimum of ~~15%~~ 50% of the parcel area preserved as vegetated open space. The buffer yards, landscaped parking islands, building and perimeter landscaping shall be included in the calculation of open space, so long as a minimum width of 10 feet is maintained. Vegetated storm water management facilities shall be included in the calculation of open space.

(f) Impervious Surface. The MO District shall contain a maximum impervious surface of ~~85%.~~no greater than 50%.

FOH: This amount of impervious surface is as great as that of CI and LI. We believe the original idea of creating an office park at this strategic location has been effectively altered by this extreme amount of allowable impervious surface. Rather, we recommend 50% impervious surface which may include the perimeter buffer, especially as a safeguard to the surrounding AG zoned district and James Run. This is contrary thinking to that within the Builders for the Bay document.