




DATE: June 18, 2024

TO: Bethesda Downton Plan Design Advisory Panel (DAP)

FROM: Grace Bogdan, Planner III, Downcounty Planning 
Stephanie Dickel, Regulatory Supervisor, Downcounty Planning

RE: Staff comments for the June 26, 2024 DAP Meeting

This will be a hybrid meeting, attendees can participate in person or virtually.

Item #1

7749 Old Georgetown Road

Stonebridge, Developer

SK+I Architects

Vika, Landscape Architect

- 1st Site Plan presentation, focusing on more detailed and developed architectural expression and site design, consistent with the Design Guidelines and determination of design excellence points.
- The Sketch Plan was presented twice to the DAP in 2023, with the corner design to be refined at the time of site plan.
- The Project proposes a reduced tower setback from the property to the south on Old Georgetown Road. At Sketch Plan, the Applicant was proposing the minimum Sector Plan recommended tower separation of 22'6" and this Site Plan proposal revises the setback to range from 18' to 22'6", with an undulating façade that matches the treatment of the facades on St Elmo Avenue and Old Georgetown Road frontage. Given the location of this project is on a short block, and the proposed alternative treatments by the Applicant, Staff is supportive of the reduced tower separation.
- St Elmo Avenue is designated a Canopy Corridor within the Sector Plan and as such recommends a double row of trees where possible. Given the existing conditions and limited right-of-way along St Elmo Avenue, the Project is unable to provide additional street trees but will provide landscaping at the street level. Additional detail will need to be provided for these landscaped areas at the street level. Staff recommends additional landscape plantings to be incorporated into the balconies at the base (first six stories) and within the pedestrian refuge between the loading and garage entrance.
- The Applicant is requesting 30 points for design excellence.

[Sketch Plan Meeting minutes from July 2023](#)

Design Excellence Guide:

- *10 Points: Generally consistent with the Design Guidelines and meets four of the CR Guideline Criteria*
- *20 Points: Superlative design that in a uniquely compelling way meets the Design Guidelines or overcomes a significant site or similar constraint; a top example of design within Montgomery County*
- *30 Points: Singular design that exemplifies the highest intent of the Design Guidelines and may be considered a top example of design within the Mid-Atlantic region*