

RESOLUTION NO. 25-05-PC

A RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY OF LAUREL PLANNING COMMISSION TO APPROVE THE FINAL M-X-T SITE PLAN APPLICATION NO. 973 FOR THE WESTSIDE PROPERTY IN THE M-X-T ZONE

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council created a, Mixed Use Transportation Zone (M-X-T) which functions as an overlay to facilitate the orderly development of land located near major intersections and transit facilities and promote the mixed use development of land; and

WHEREAS, this particular zoning is specifically identified for the subject property within the duly adopted Master Plan of the City of Laurel, as adopted by the Mayor and City Council of Laurel in July 25, 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council placed the subject property within the M-X-T zone for consistency with the duly adopted Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, on January 28, 2013, the Mayor and City Council of Laurel adopted City Ordinance Number 1764, approving the M-X-T Conceptual Site Plan for 39.87 acres of the subject property; and

WHEREAS, on April 22, 2013, the Mayor and City Council of Laurel adopted City Ordinance Number 1770, approving the M-X-T Conceptual Site Plan for Parcel A which consisted of 19.89 acres of the subject property; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2013, the City of Laurel Planning Commission approved Resolution Number 13-10-PC, approving the M-X-T Final Site Plan Design on Parcel C, Westside for 484 multi-family units; and

WHEREAS, on May 12, 2015, the City of Laurel Planning Commission approved Resolution Number 15-10-PC, approving the Final Site and Landscape Plans for Westside Townhouses; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 2015, the City of Laurel Planning Commission approved Resolution Number 15-13-PC, approving the Final Subdivision Plat- Westside for 56 townhouse units; and

WHEREAS, on June 11, 2019, the City of Laurel Planning Commission approved Resolution 19-03-PC approving revised conceptual site plan for an M-X-T zone-Westside, reducing the retail area to a maximum of 40,000 sq. ft. and adding 81 townhouses; and

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel Unified and Development Code provides that the Planning Commission shall review and approve a Site plan for an M-X-T zone, and it is the wish of the Mayor and City Council to also participate in the conceptual plan review,

and therefore the Commission conditions its approval of the City Council to participate, and incorporate and findings of the Council to be used in the preparation of a Final Site Plan of M-X-T development; and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2025 a letter requesting comments on the Application was sent to the City of Laurel's Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation and Office of the Fire Marshal and Permit Services, Laurel Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad; and

WHEREAS, signs were posted on the Property, advising the public of the public hearings of the City of Laurel Planning Commission: and

WHEREAS, letters advising of the public hearing before the City of Laurel Planning Commission and the public hearing before the Laurel Mayor and City Council were sent to all contiguous property owners by certified mail; and

WHEREAS, the City of Laurel Planning Commission held a public hearing on July 15, 2025, and approved the Site Plan for an M-X-T Zone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Laurel of Planning Commission, that the Planning Commission, having reviewed the application for approval of the Final Site Plan for an M-X-T Zone and the evidence and testimony submitted at the hearing hereby adopts the following:

FINDINGS OF FACT AND ANALYSIS

The applicant, Strittmatter, is seeking approval of a Final M-X-T Site and Landscape Plan for a Panda Express restaurant that will include a drive-thru. The entire Westside property is currently zoned Mixed-Use Transportation Oriented (M-X-T), and has been the subject of numerous prior subdivision and site plan approvals. The applicant plans to re-subdivide the existing Lot 1 into two new lots: Lot 5 and Lot 6. Lot 6, which will measure 0.9477 acres, will be the site of the new Panda Express restaurant.

The current application for a Final Site Plan in the M-X-T Zone Approval meets the requirements of Section 20-12.5 of the Unified Land Development Code.

The project conforms to the purposes of an M-X-T site per Section 20-12.1 of the Unified Land Development Code as stated below:

- (a) To promote the orderly development and redevelopment of land in the vicinity of major intersections, and major transit stops, so that these areas will enhance the economic status of the county and provide an expanding source of desirable employment and living opportunities for its citizens;**

The Westside project is bounded on its west side by Interstate 95, and the new "On" ramp for the Interstate 95/Contee Road interchange, Van Dusen Road to the east, and Konterra Drive to the south, and this project is thus situated in the vicinity of major

transportation intersections. The proposed combination of apartments, townhomes, and retail uses will add desirable employment and living opportunities for the citizens of Laurel and will enhance the economic status of the City of Laurel and Prince George's County. The addition of the proposed Panda Express will add another restaurant to serve the residents of Westside and citizens throughout the City of Laurel.

- (b) To conserve the value of land and buildings by maximizing the public and private development potential inherent in the location of the zone, this might otherwise become scattered throughout and outside the City. to its detriment;**

Westside is a large, mixed-use project that will bring together a variety of uses, and the Panda Express will provide another restaurant opportunity for citizens in this community.

- (c) To promote the effective and optimum uses of transit and other major transportation systems;**

This property will be part of a development that abuts Interstate 95, with 484 residential multifamily units, potentially 137 townhomes, and 40,000 sq. ft. of retail with access to Interstate 95 is promoting effective and optimum use of a major transportation system. The Panda Express will provide another reason for travelers along Interstate 95 to stop and spend their dollars in the City of Laurel.

- (d) To facilitate and encourage a twenty-four hour environment to ensure continuing of the project after workday hours through a maximum of activity, and the interaction between the uses and those who live, work in, or visit the area;**

The Westside mixed use project contains two types of residential uses, commercial retail uses and proposed hospitality uses. The retail uses will provide an opportunity for both residents and visitors to the Westside project to secure retail goods and services which are envisioned to include food and beverage items as well as restaurants and other retail service uses. The Panda Express restaurant will add to this mix of uses that will serve not only those who live in the City, but also visitors who may stop as they travel along Interstate 95

- (e) To encourage diverse land uses which blend together harmoniously.**

Retail/restaurant uses will be proposed to be located toward the south end of the project near the Van Dusen road frontage. A wide public access road, Westside Boulevard, has been constructed through the project to provide access to the entire Westside development. Westside consists of both residential and retail/restaurant uses, and both have been designed to blend harmoniously, thus satisfying the use requirement..

(f) To create dynamic, functional relationships among individual uses within a distinctive visual character and identify;

The Westside development has been planned with great efficiency, combining retail/restaurant/service uses with residential dwellings in a manner that has allowed economies of scale beyond those that could occur for single-purpose projects. The Panda Express will simply add to the efficient plan of Westside.

(g) [Reserved.]

(h) To permit a flexible response to the market;

The residential market is being shaped by an increased demand for apartment rental units and fee simple townhomes, and the residential portion of this project includes both products. The Panda Express will respond to the market for quick-serve restaurants to serve the residents of both types of units.

(i) To provide an opportunity and incentive to the developer to achieve excellence in physical, social, and economic planning.

Westside has achieved this level of excellence, and the Panda Express will serve the needs of its residents, along with other residents of the City of Laurel, and others traveling along Interstate 95.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City of Laurel Planning Commission **APPROVE** the Final M-X-T Site Plan for the proposed Panda restaurant and drive-thru on the Westside property, with the following conditions:

1. The currently existing Lot 1 on the Westside property shall be re-subdivided into two (2) lots, as set forth in Preliminary Plan of Subdivision No. 972, said lots shall be recorded among the land records of Prince George's County, MD, and the proposed Panda Express shall be located upon what is currently proposed to be Lot 6. All construction shall conform to this ordinance, as well as this Final Site and Landscape Plan, as approved by the City of Laurel Planning Commission.
2. Handicapped parking signage shall be on a pole no less than seven feet (7') tall AFF (Maryland Accessibility Code) with a sign underneath indicating that violation of this parking restriction will result in a \$250.00 fine. One (1) van accessible parking space is required with a minimum 96"-wide access aisle. The

designated handicapped parking spaces must have a slope of no more than 2.08% in all directions.

3. 3. A drive-thru for the proposed Panda Express restaurant shall only be permitted if a special exception for that drive-thru is approved by the Board of Appeals.
4. The Applicant shall comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations in the development of the Property.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect upon its passage.

PASSED this 15th day of July 2025.

APPROVED:

Brooke Quillen
Secretary
City of Laurel Planning Commission

Rick Wilson
Chairman
City of Laurel Planning Commission