



**PLANNING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT
SUPPLEMENTAL**

Prepared by: Kevin Small, AICP, RLA
Date: July 10, 2025
Meeting Date: July 17, 2025 **Case No. 06P-25-01-SD/SP Continuance**

General Information

Applicant: Bel Air Marketplace, LLC

Owner: Harford Mall Business Trust (c/o CBL)
Shops at Harford Mall LLC

Status of Applicant: Equitable Interest in Property Ownership

Location: 600 to 696 Belair Road – Baltimore Pike/US Route 1- Business and Maryland Route 24 (Harford Mall)

<i>Lot/Building Size:</i>	Parcel 1946	Lot A1	29.38 acres	436,473 square feet
	Parcel 1946	Lot A2	04.43 acres	59,864 square feet
	Total Commercial		33.81 acres	496,337 square feet
	Parcel 1946	Lot A1	249 multi-family dwelling units	

Requested Action: The Applicant requests:

1. A Site Plan and Landscape Plan approval for the development of four buildings totaling 82,924 square feet
2. Modification of the existing Special Development approval for the Mixed-Use Center

Zoning: B-3, General Business

Existing Land Use: Mixed-Use Center

Zoning History: A Mixed-Use Center is permitted as a Special Development in the B-3 General Business district. The Harford Mall has been modified several times since its initial construction in 1972.

- Phase I – 2022, Shops at Harford Mall (removal of Sears bldg.)
- Phase II – 2024, Residences at Harford Mall (conversion of the shopping center use to a mixed-use center)

Transportation: The Harford County Transit Link runs the Bel Air Circulator (Orange Line), which has a stop at the Harford Mall at the northeast corner of the existing mall. This stop is also a transfer stop for the Blue Line and Green Line.

Tollgate Road is classified as a Major Collector on the Harford County Road Classification Map. Boulton Street is a Town street and an Urban Collector. MD Route 24 is an Expressway. Belair Road (U.S. Rte. 1 Business or Baltimore Pike) is a Principal Urban Arterial. There are two existing signalized entrances to the site along Boulton Street: one opposite the Mall Annex; and one opposite the intersection with Gateway Drive. The previous approval for Phase II proposes to eliminate the eastern most entrance and relocate an unsignalized access closer to MD Route 24 providing right-in/right-out/left-in access. The development site also has right-in/right-out access from Baltimore Pike.

Landscaping, Lighting & Amenities: The plan has proposed replacement site lighting. Landscaping is required in accordance with Article VIII and the applicant has submitted a landscape plan for the proposed development.

Open Space for the project is satisfied through a payment for a fee-in-lieu of \$176,500 as required by the previous development approval. Public Amenity is required for each building (3) over 10,000 square feet as required in Section 165-118.E.

Architectural Review: Architectural elevations and renderings in color of all sides of the proposed buildings have been submitted for review. A copy of the Town architectural consultant comments is attached.

Analysis:

The Applicant is requesting Site Plan and Landscape Plan approval to construct four (4) buildings totaling 82,924 square feet of commercial uses within the project area of the Harford Mall. This will be the third Phase of re-development for the mall which is an alteration to the existing Mixed-Use Center and requires modification of the existing Special Development approval. The proposed project is reviewed in aggregate so all parcels and buildings within the Harford Mall project area and must meet the criteria for a Mixed-Use Center. The first two Phases (Shops at Harford Mall & Residences at Harford Mall) are approved and are not subject to any amendment or revision by the Planning Commission.

SITE

The current building area of the Harford Mall is 496,337 square feet, which includes commercial space and 249 multi-family dwelling units. The proposed demolition of the Macy’s building and a part of the mall amounts to 172,228 square feet projected for removal. The application proposes to add 82,924 square feet of new development. Calculation of adjusted space is outlined below:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| • Existing commercial space | 496,337 square feet |
| • Building area to be demolished (-172,228 square feet) | 324,109 square feet |
| • Proposed new building area (+82,924 square feet) | 407,033 square feet |

The proposed new development is divided into four (4) separate buildings identified on the Site Plan as five (5) proposed uses:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Building 100 (supermarket) | 35,684 square feet |
| • Building 200 (restaurant/retail) | 14,015 square feet |
| • Building 300 (restaurant/retail) | 16,444 square feet |
| • Building 600 (restaurant/retail) | 11,175 square feet |
| • Building 700 (restaurant/retail) | 5,606 square feet |
| Total | 82,924 square feet |

A condition of the approval for the Residences at Harford Mall (Phase II) requires that a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the total development must be commercial space. A similar requirement has also been memorialized in Town code to maintain consistency with the Comprehensive Plan (see Ordinance No. 839-25, effective April 17, 2025). The space utilized by the previously approved multi-family use is 264,120 square feet. The proposed development will result in 367,548 square feet of commercial space which provides for a minimum of 58.2 percent commercial space. Any additional demolition of building will require review of this proposed percentage.

When the interior corridor space (48,888 sf) is removed from the total mall space (496,337 sf), this area is reduced to 447,449 square feet. A portion of this corridor space will be demolished (9,403 sf) when the Macy's structure is razed.

- Commercial space proposed with demolition incorporated 407,033 square feet
- Corridor space remaining in mall (not required for parking) 39,485 square feet
- Space applied to parking calculation @ 3.5sp/1000sf **367,548 square feet**

Parking is located throughout the site and must total 3.5 parking spaces per 1000 square feet for the commercial area per Section 165-51.H. 1,472 parking spaces are provided for commercial use equaling approximately 4 spaces per 1000 square feet thus exceeding the code requirement of 1287 spaces. Abandonment of 34,307 square feet of commercial space within the mall conditioned with the Phase II approval remains required only until the demolition of Macy's occurs as part of Phase III.

Town of Bel Air code Section 165-52 requires fifteen percent of the total parcel to be open space resulting in 5.07 acres required. 1.54 acres of on-site open space was approved along with a \$176,500 payment of a fee-in-lieu for the remaining acreage. Additional on-site acreage has been provided in the current application, however, the requirements associated with Phase II apply.

Modified pedestrian connections are shown on the Revised Site Plan and are highlighted on a Pedestrian Circulation exhibit (designated exhibits 6A & 6B). Crosswalks appear to have been cleaned up and green areas added to the parking area. Staff remains concerned with the pedestrian connection from the north end of Bldg. 600 to Bldg. 300. Walkers use a concrete walk between two drive aisles with no buffering which appears to be uncomfortable and unsafe. Refuse/recycling enclosures have been adjusted to meet Section 165-59.A(6). However, an enclosure previously shown at the south end of Bldg. 600 does not appear to have been relocated. In addition, an enlargement of a typical enclosure was requested in the continuance letter and

should be shown on Sheet LP02. The applicant is encouraged to elaborate on the enclosures at the hearing and their respective service route at the hearing.

A concern regarding the 30-foot width of the main north/south vehicular connection which may encourage speeding was noted at the previous hearing. The submitted Revised Site Plan shows a reduction to 28-feet and what is graphically shown appears to be 2-foot curb extensions at the two intersections along the vehicle route which would reduce the travel lane width (and crosswalk width) to 24-feet at these locations. Stop signs have also been added to these intersections. If the Planning Commission is not convinced this will create a safe pedestrian crossing condition, exploration of elevated crosswalks at these two locations may be appropriate.

The easternmost access from Baltimore Pike has been adjusted based on comments from the Town. Minor revisions to the sidewalk, the median, and the adjacent existing parking are recommended and shown on Exhibit C. MDoT will also provide comment on this access. In addition, the left turn at Boulton Street located at the northern end of this drive aisle has limited queuing length and may receive extensive use generated from the proposed commercial and the residential development. This means trucks using this access could be encumbering the vehicle stacking to a point of blocking the westbound thru travel lane of Boulton Street. Based on this issue and the comments from Exhibit 12 (Auto-Turn Review), it is recommended that trucks servicing the commercial establishments be prohibited from using this access point and be directed to enter the development from the south. This exhibit also shows a massive area dedicated to truck turning north of Building 300 that appears unnecessary, especially if changes are made to the design of future Building 400. In addition, the future condition of the northernmost internal intersection is recommended to be a four-way stop. Traffic requirements related to service ingress/egress will be reflected on the pending Town traffic review letter.

No Outdoor Dining & Bar service uses are considered part of the current request since additional information is required for proper review. Changes associated with later phases may impact the current submitted Site Plan so any change to the footprint, architecture or proposed use will influence the level of review and may require Planning Commission approval.

PREVIOUS APPROVALS

Shops at Harford Mall – 05P-21-01-SP/SD/SB (Phase I)

- Architectural Performance Agreement (September 5, 2023) – Bond for possible architectural improvements to the southwest façade of the Harford Mall. This document is due to expire and must be renewed on or before September 5, 2025.

- Public Works and Developer Agreement (September 12, 2023 & amended October 10, 2024) – Off-site intersection improvements at Gateway & Boulton and at North Tollgate Road & Baltimore Pike. A revised implementation schedule is attached to the application provided as Exhibit 8A (this is a revision from the previous schedule provided).

Residences at Harford Mall – 11P-23-03-SP/SD/SB (Phase II)

- Recordation of a Subdivision Plat for proposed Lot A3 prior to submission for building permit.
- Final Site Plan and Final Landscape Plan to be approved and signed including revised architectural exhibits prior to submission for building permit.
- Off-site road improvements along Boulton Street between Tollgate Road & MD Route 24 and intersection upgrades at Tollgate/Baltimore Pike prior to Final Use & Occupancy permit.

LANDSCAPE

The applicant has submitted a Revised Landscape Plan for review. The parking lot planting has been improved with additional trees, however, several interior islands are encumbered by Filterra SWM structures which apparently prevent tree planting. It is recommended five (5) diamond islands with a single tree be placed in the interior of the parking to compensate for the islands lacking trees. A detail for diamond island planting (attached) should be added to Sheet LP02. Landscape is shown along the rear façade of Building 200 and Building 600. Proposed utilities appear to have been adjusted to allow for additional interior trees. The screen walls around the service areas and refuse/recycling enclosures appear to be noted for height, color and material in the architectural elevations.

ARCHITECTURE

The applicant has provided revised color elevations and renderings of the proposed architecture for the proposed buildings (Exhibit 4A). Comments from the Town architectural consultant are attached. It should be noted that as users are identified for each building, any desired change in site or architecture may require a new review by the Planning Commission.

A comprehensive signage plan and chart was previously submitted. This proposal is in harmony with the architecture and stays within the limits of the code. Directional signs within the interior of the development do not count against the freestanding sign limit as they are for wayfinding purposes.

TRAFFIC

The review of anticipated traffic impact from this development is ongoing in coordination with the County and the State. The required study was submitted, comments from the Town traffic consultant were provided, and the applicant submitted a revised study in response. The Town will respond once comments are received from the municipal consultant. A summary outlining major previous improvements include:

- Phase I - Add left turn to southbound North Tollgate Road with approval from Harford County and add pedestrian crossing improvements to intersection of Gateway Drive & Boulton Street.
- Phase II – Add landscaped medians and restripe Boulton Street, revise the signal at Harford Mall annex to flashing red and yellow lights, and modify northbound South Tollgate Road thru/right-turn lanes with approval from Harford County.

Pedestrian improvements to the intersection of Tollgate Road and Baltimore Pike will be required as outlined in previous comments for Phase II. The Business US 1 & MD 22 Multi-Modal Corridor Study commissioned by the Town and County will also be considered as part of this review and an additional lane may be required along Baltimore Pike west of the access point to Tollgate Road.

MIXED-USE

Mixed-Use Centers are a special development and must meet performance standards as outlined in Section 165-53.I(2)(g). The architecture must be in harmony with the rest of the development and with the neighborhood. Internal vehicular and pedestrian traffic must be designed to minimize conflicts and to mitigate potential impact to patrons or residents. An exhibit has been provided related to signs. A traffic study was submitted, and the Town is in process of reviewing the information. Security, loading, unloading, and recycling/refuse must be organized between owners and coordinated with the Town. A Development Agreement was executed between the property owners as part of the Phase II (residential) approval. All previous conditions of approval for Phase I and II still apply.

MASTER PLAN

The applicant has provided a sketch showing anticipated development replacing the mall structure and development at Boulton & MD Route 24 and Tollgate & Baltimore Pike. This concept is illustrative in nature and does not obligate the applicant to any future design. A pedestrian connection concept and phasing plan are also provided for review.

Recommendations:

Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Commission provide a consistency determination of the proposed development with the 2022 Bel Air Comprehensive Plan as required by Town code Section 165-19.

Site Plan

At a minimum, approval of the preliminary Site Plan is conditioned on the following:

1. Prior to Building Permit Application, submission of a Final Site Plan for signature incorporating comments from this staff report, and comments from:
 - a. Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company dated May 12, 2025
 - b. Harford County Health Department dated May 23, 2025
 - c. Harford County Soil Conservation District dated May 21, 2025
 - d. Conditional TIA approval letter from the Town and comments from Harford County and MD-SHA for off-site intersection or road improvements pending.
 - e. Bel Air Public Works comments dated May 21, 2025
 - f. Town Architectural consultant comments May 26, 2025, and July 3, 2025.
 - g. Redlined Exhibit C providing for minor adjustments to the Site Plan and Landscape Plan.
2. Prior to approval of utility construction drawings, applicant must address comments from Maryland American Water Company.
3. Coordination of utility placement, easements and rights-of-way with the Department of Public Works prior to building permit issuance.
4. Public Amenity provision at a minimum of \$30,000 is required based on Section 165-118.E and must be approved by the Cultural Arts Commission along with submission of receipts to the Town prior to Use & Occupancy permit.
5. Provision of a cost estimate along with an associated architectural agreement and performance bond to meet requirements of Section 165-32.C(4)(d) related to the east façade of the remaining Harford Mall structure is required prior to building permit issuance.
6. Coordination with Bel Air Police Department regarding security and surveillance measures within the entire Harford Mall development consistent with Section 165-53.I(2)(g)[1][h] is required prior to Use & Occupancy permit.

7. No further permits or approvals will be granted by the Town prior to the completion and approval of off-site improvements required for Shops at Harford Mall – 05P-21-01-SP/SD/SB (Phase I).
8. Complete all site work on the Final Site Plan prior to issuance of the final Use and Occupancy permit:
 - a. Construction of required improvements outlined in the Town Traffic Impact Analysis conditional approval letter pending.
 - b. Landscape installation.

Landscape Plan

At a minimum, approval of the Landscape Plan is conditioned on the following:

1. Prior to Building Permit issuance, submission and approval of the Final Landscape Plan incorporating comments from this staff report and the following:
 - a. Addition of five (5) Zelkova serrata to the interior of the parking lot based on Exhibit C.
 - b. Addition of refuse/recycling enclosure detail to sheet LP02 indicating material, height, and color.
 - c. Addition of Diamond Island detail to sheet LP02 providing for install and maintenance of trees
 - d. Addition of Elevated Crosswalk detail to LP02 (if required by Planning Commission).

Special Development for the Mixed-Use Center

The Special Development for Mixed-Use Center is based upon the following findings of fact that the applicant has adequately demonstrated adherence to Section 165-53.I(2)(g):

- [a] The applicant has provided a unified arrangement of buildings, service areas, parking, signage and landscaping.
- [b] The architecture, site design, lighting and signage incorporate consistent design and theme elements and materials, massing and facade design for the project that is in harmony with the character of the neighborhood.
- [c] The internal circulation system is be designed to minimize through traffic and traffic conflicts within the project.
- [d] Safe pedestrian movement and the provision of pedestrian walks within the parking lot and surrounding the building perimeter is considered in the design.
- [e] All proposed establishments have vehicular service access either from an individual service drive, space or from a common service yard. All loading,

trash removal, compaction or similar activities are segregated from public areas and screened from public view.

- [f] Signs to identify the use of an occupant will be designed as part of the architectural design of the building. Proposed signage is conditioned for approval of the preliminary plan and is subject to review and approval by the Planning Commission.
- [g] Directional and informational signs are designed and adequately provided.
- [h] Center management is responsible for providing on-site security service.
- [i] A traffic and/or parking study was submitted and is under review.
- [j] The owners of all lots have executed and recorded a Development Agreement with the Town providing that all owners acknowledge and agree to be bound by performance standards as an overall scheme of development, outlining all shared elements, granting reciprocal easements to permit each owner to access any other owner's lot or parcel of land for the purposes of compliance with the Town Code and for either remediating any zoning violation or to comply with the Town Code for the purposes of any approvals sought by any of the owners of the lot and agreeing that the Town shall permit enforcement of any portion of the Town Code upon one or more owners of any lot or parcel of land contained within the Mixed Use Center scheme of development.



Kevin L. Small, AICP, RLA

Director of Planning & Community Development

Attachments: Architectural Consultant comments
Revised Site Plan (exhibit 1A)
Revised Overall Site Plan – Mixed-Use Center (exhibit 2A)
Revised Landscape Plan (exhibit 3A)
Revised Architectural Elevations & Renderings (exhibit 4A)
Master Plan (exhibit 5)
Pedestrian Plans (exhibit 6A & 6B)
Offsite improvements construction schedule (exhibit 8A)
Applicant Presentation (exhibit 10A)
Auto-Turn Service (exhibit 12)
Exhibit C – minor changes to Site & Landscape Plan

Paul D. Edmeades
ARCHITECT / PLANNER
AIA



Town of Bel Air
Department of Planning & Community Development
Mr. Kevin L. Small, Director
705 E. Churchville Road
Bel Air, Maryland 21014

July 3, 2025

RE: Second Design Review
Harford Mall-Mixed Use Lifestyle Center
600 Bel Air Road / Baltimore Pike

Dear Mr.Small:

The following is a response to your request to do a Second Review of the design aspects of the submittal for a proposed Phase III Harford Mall Redevelopment (Mixed-Use Lifestyle Center). The documents I received are as follows:

1. Rendered Site Plans, Perspectives, and Elevations of the proposed Lifestyle Center with a sheet indicating the wall materials and received by the Town of Bel Air on June 26, 2025
2. Rendered Elevations signed and sealed by David Yung and received by the Town of Bel Air on June 26, 2025.

In my report on May 26, 2025 I raised the issue of incorporating brick into the façades of the buildings in the proposed development. The second submission received on June 26, 2025 Indicates decorative masonry to be used on the project. The Town received a clarification of the decorative masonry indication on June 30, 2025, which states that the decorative masonry is of two types.

1. A grey / white smooth face concrete bock with dimensions of 8 inches in height, 16 inches in length, and approximately 8 inches in width, or
2. Red Brick with dimensions of 3 5/8 inches thick by 2 1/4 inches high by 7 5/8 inches long which is typically referred to as "modular" brick. The brick is to be red brick color and consistent throughout the buildings.

In my analysis on May 26, 2025 I raised the issue about the incorporation of brick into the building façades. In the revised submission on June 26, 2025 and clarified on June 30, 2025 the designation of decorative masonry is used to indicate modular brick as well as smooth face concrete block. In my opinion the smooth faced concrete block as used in the proposed elevations is not decorative masonry. As I mentioned in my previous analysis, the Phase II development uses

brick and other materials effectively to create a unified design. I think it is reasonable to expect the Phase III development to do the same and incorporate more brick.

Based on my analysis, I feel that the proposed Harford Mall Mixed-Use Lifestyle Center should be revised.

Please note that these comments concern only the visual aspects of the design proposal submitted. Other requirements of the development regulations are not a part of this review. All building code analyses, life safety code analyses, other code analyses, and constructability analyses are specifically excluded from this visual review. In addition this review does not include structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing or other engineering services.

If you have any questions please call me.

Sincerely,



Paul D. Edmeades, RA, AIA, NCARB

Boulton St at Gateway Blvd, & US 1 at Tollgate

LOCATION: Harford County

Activity	STATUS	DATE COMPLETE / ANTIC. COMPLETION	NOTE
PRECONSTRUCTION/PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES			
RECEIVED LOI	COMPLETE	NA	
RECEIVED HARFORD COUNTY UTILITY PERMIT	COMPLETE	NA	
SUBMITTED SOS AND SUBMITTALS	COMPLETE	NA	
RECEIVED REVIEWED SOS	COMPLETE	NA	
RECEIVED APPROVED SUBMITTALS	COMPLETE	NA	
MISS UTILITY REQUESTED	COMPLETE	NA	
RECEIVED EXECUTED CONTRACT	COMPLETE	NA	
RELEASED LONG LEAD ITEMS (PED POLES, UPS & CABINET)	COMPLETE	NA	
EXPECTED DELIVERY FOR PED POLES	COMPLETE	NA	
STAKEOUT	COMPLETE	NA	
PRECONSTRUCTION MEETING WITH COUNTY/SHA (RT 1)	COMPLETE	NA	
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES (BOULTON ST AT GATEWAY)			
TEST PITS & BORES	COMPLETE	May-25	
FOUND ADDITIONAL UNMARKED UTILITIES	COMPLETE	May-25	
ADDITIONAL UTILITY LOCATES (4 in total)	COMPLETE	May-25	Note: Due to additional utility interference in ground, it was determined work could no longer be done with mechanical equipment as originally planned and must be performed by hand digging.
ONSITE MEETING WITH TOWN TO DISCUSS OPTIONS DUE TO UTILITY INTERFERENCE	COMPLETE	6/9	Mark Owens Met with Bud Haight and Charles Dawson
INSTALLED HANDBOXES	COMPLETE	6/11-6/17	
INSTALLED POLE FOUNDATIONS AND CONDUITS TO HOLES	COMPLETE	6/23-6/25	Note: This work was completed two days earlier than scheduled
START AND COMPLETE TRENCHING	IN PROGRESS	6/30-7/3	
INSTALL POLES	IN PROGRESS	7/3	
INSTALL CONCRETE SIDEWALKS AND CURBS...	IN PROGRESS	7/7-7/10	
INSTALL SIGNALS, PUSHBUTTONS, AND CABLING	IN PROGRESS	7/14-7/16	
INSTALL SIGNS & PAVEMENT MARKINGS	IN PROGRESS	7/14-7/17	
TURN ON (ACTIVATE PED SIGNALS)	IN PROGRESS	7/14-7/17	
CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES (US 1 AT TOLLGATE)			
INSTALLED FOUNDATION FOR UPS	COMPLETE	6/24	
INSTALL SIGNAL AND CABLING	IN PROGRESS	7/15-7/17	Note: This work will take place overnight to reduce daytime traffic impacts.
SIGNS & PAVEMENT MARKINGS	IN PROGRESS	7/15-7/17	Note: This work will take place overnight to reduce daytime traffic impacts.