

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of May 19, 2015

**SUBJECT: Greenhills School Landscape Modification Request
(850 Greenhills Drive)
File No. SP15-008**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed landscape modifications in order to maintain the previously approved landscape plan, according to Chapter 62 (Landscape and Screening Ordinance), Section 5:602 (2)(g) and 5:603 (1).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that this landscape modification be **approved** because the modifications are consistent with the intent of the ordinance and are associated with a previously approved site plan.

LOCATION

The site is located on the east side of Greenhills Drive, west of US-23 (Northeast Area). This site is located in the Fleming Creek watershed.

DESCRIPTION OF PETITION

The petitioner is proposing to construct an outdoor classroom north of the main parking lot for this private school. An administrative amendment has been submitted for the proposed improvement. The administrative amendment petition requires that parking lot landscaping be brought up to current City standards, including the construction of interior parking lot islands and bioswales, which must constitute at least 50% of the interior islands.

The petitioner is asking for a modification from the section of Chapter 62 (Landscaping and Screening) that requires new landscaped islands and bioswales be constructed in existing parking lots. The petitioner points out that no changes are proposed to the existing parking lot and that the outdoor classroom will not result in any new usable floor area. The petitioner points out that, "the proposed outdoor educational area has no impact on or relationship to the existing parking lot adjacent to it. The educational area is largely comprised of aesthetic components therefore improving the appearance of the area next to the street and parking lot. (The petitioner) has proposed rain gardens and provisions to storm water runoff, proposes the use of native plant material and is mindfully integrating (the project) into the existing landform to be low profile and aesthetically pleasing".

Under a provision in the Landscape and Screening Ordinance, the Planning Commission (or City Council, whichever is the approving body) has the authority to approve a modification to the landscape and screening regulations if the modifications are consistent with the intent of this ordinance. The petitioner is requesting a modification to the following:

- Vehicular use areas greater than 3,300 square feet shall contain protected landscape islands located entirely within the perimeter of the vehicular use area, for the purpose of breaking up the expanse of pavement.
- When the total area required in interior landscape islands for all of the vehicular use areas on site exceeds 750 square feet, at least 50% of the area in the required interior landscape area must be depressed bioretention areas and utilized for storm water management. Depressed bioretention areas can be used to meet the stormwater pretreatment requirements in Chapter 63.

HISTORY

Greenhills School opened in 1968 as a independent middle school. Over time, the school was expanded to include grades 6-12. Special exception use and site plan approvals were granted in 1995 and 2007 for major additions to the building and site. The 2007 site plan, which included parking lot construction, predates the current landscape requirements for interior landscaping spacing and bioswales.

STAFF COMMENTS

Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Planning Coordinator - Staff supports the petitioner's request for a landscape modification for this site.

Prepared by Jeff Kahan
Reviewed by Wendy Rampson
mg/5/15/15

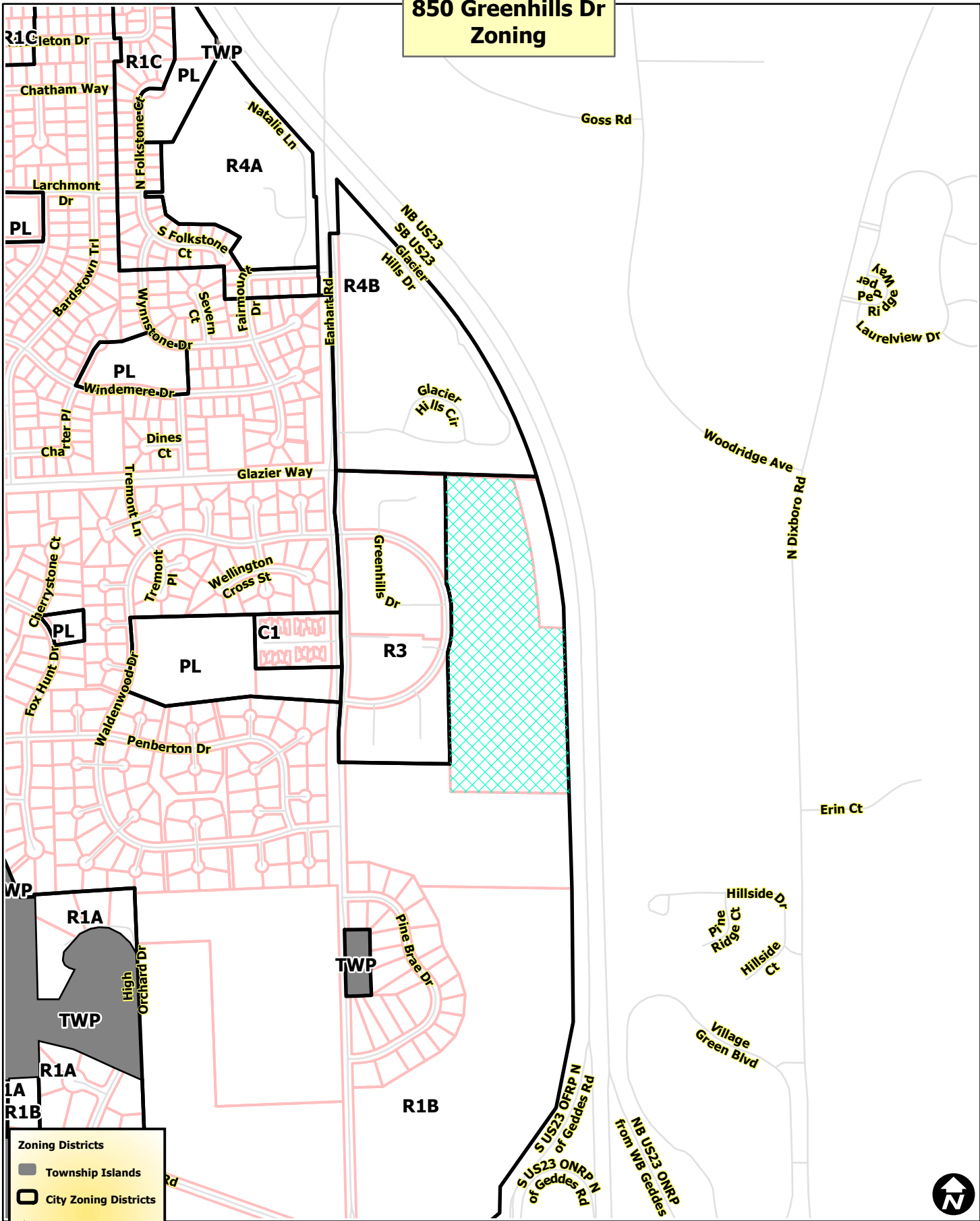
Attachments: Landscape Modification Application
Landscape Plan

c: Owner: Greenhills School
850 Greenhills Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Petitioners Representative: Kate Bond, RLA
Bond Engineering
3121 E Grand River
Howell, MI 48843

Systems Planning
File No. SP15-008

850 Greenhills Dr Zoning



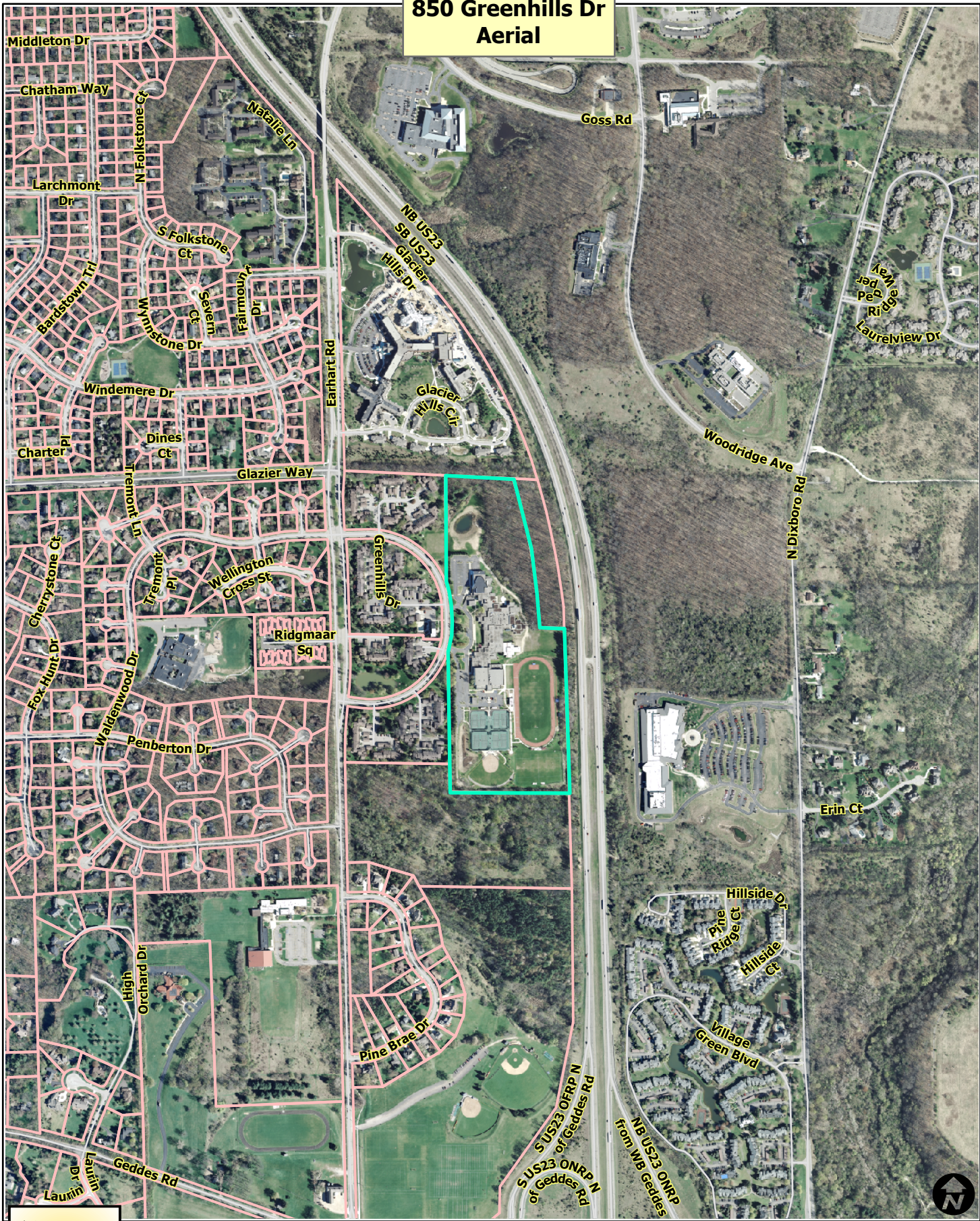
Zoning Districts

- Township Islands
- City Zoning Districts
- Railroads
- Parcels
- Huron River



Map date: 4/30/2015
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850 Greenhills Dr Aerial



-  Railroads
-  Parcels
-  Huron River



850 Greenhills Dr Aerial



- Railroads
- Parcels
- Huron River



Map date: 4/30/2015
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City of Ann Arbor

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES — PLANNING DIVISION

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APPLICATION FOR MODIFICATIONS FROM CHAPTER 62 (LANDSCAPE AND SCREENING)

See www.a2gov.org/planning for submittal requirements.

TO: Ann Arbor City Planning Commission

We, the undersigned, respectfully petition the City Planning Commission or City Council to approve these modifications from the landscape and/or screening requirements of Sections 5:602, 5:603, 5:604 or 5:606 of Chapter 62, as they relate to the property hereinafter described.

A. Project Information

(Give name of site plan project and tax code number of property)

Greenhills School Outdoor Educational Area

09-09-25-200-061

B. Petitioner Information

The petitioner(s) requesting the modifications are:

(List petitioners' name; address; telephone number; and interest in the land; i.e., owner, land contract, option to purchase, etc.)

Greenhills School 850 Greenhills Drive Ann Arbor, MI 48105

(734)205-4059

Owner

Also interested in the petition are:

(List others with legal or equitable interest)

C. Modification Request

The petitioner requests approval to modify the above landscape and/or screening requirements in the following ways (if necessary, attach additional page):

Chap 62

Section _____, Paragraph _____

Exemption from the addition of bioswales to the existing interior landscape islands in adjacent

parking lot

Section _____, Paragraph _____

D. Standards for Approval

Flexibility in the application of the landscape and screening regulations may be allowed if certain standards are met. The modifications must be consistent with the intent of Chapter 62; be included on a site plan and in a motion approved by the City Planning Commission or City Council; and be associated with specific site conditions as listed in Section 5:608(2)(c).

- 1. What are the specific site conditions that necessitate this request and how do they warrant the modifications of Chapter 62 requirements? (See Section 5:608(2)(c)) List relevant subsection and explain how and to what extent the modifications are justified.

'Landscape elements which are part of a previously approved site plan may be maintained and

continued as nonconforming provided no alterations of the existing landscape elements are proposed.'

- 2. How does the proposal meet the spirit and intent of Chapter 62? (See Section 5:600)

The proposed outdoor educational area has no impact on or relationship to the existing parking lot

adjacent to it. The educational area is largely comprised of aesthetic components therefore improving

the appearance of the area next to the street and parking lot. It has proposed rain gardens and provisions

for storm water runoff, proposes the use of native plant material and and is mindfully integrated into

the existing landform to be low profile and aesthetically pleasing. In addition it is ADA compliant and does

not trigger the necessity for landscape or screening based on the criteria supplied in 62-5:6(2).

