

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For the Planning Commission Meeting of September 20, 2022

**SUBJECT: Redeemer Ann Arbor Site Plan and Special Exception Use for City Planning Commission with Landscape Modifications
529 Detroit Street (addressed 521 and 529 Detroit)
Project nos. SEU21-006, SP21-045**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the Redeemer Ann Arbor Site Plan, with Landscape Modifications to allow the elimination of a conflicting land use buffer along the northeast property line, as it complies with all applicable requirements of the Unified Development Code, and other applicable laws, ordinances, standards, and regulations and based upon the following conditions:

1. All parcels must be combined before issuance of any Building Permits.

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission, after hearing all interested persons and reviewing all relevant information, including an accompanying site plan, finds the petition substantially meet the standards in Chapter 55 (Unified Development Code), Section 5.29.5.D (Special Exceptions) and therefore approves the Redeemer Ann Arbor Special Exception Use for Religious Assembly. This approval is based on the following findings:

1. The proposed use will be consistent with the R4C (Multiple-Family Dwelling) District, which provides for residential use, including special exceptions for religious assembly.
2. The proposed use will not adversely impact traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, circulation, or road intersections based on the location. Detroit Street provides access to the site, and the proposed use is consistent with the existing and other surrounding uses' traffic impact.
3. A site plan documenting the existing and proposed conditions of the site has been submitted as part of this application.

SUMMARY:

Two related applications have been submitted for approval. First is a proposed site plan to construct a 1,314 square foot addition to the building at 529 Detroit and change the vehicular circulation. A landscape modification is requested to remove the conflicting land use buffer along the northeast property line. Second is a special exception use for religious assembly. The brick building at 529 Detroit will be used as a church.

The house at 521 Detroit will remain a four-unit residence that complies with the R4C zoning district.

BACKGROUND:

The site consists of two parcels on Detroit Street, north of East Kingsley and south of North Division. The house at 521 was constructed in the 1890s by Herman Krapf. It replaced an earlier house on the site. 529 Detroit appears on 1853 City maps and is listed as Miller and Reyer's Planing Mill in the 1868 city directory. By 1874 it was called J.G. Miller's, "manufacturer of sash, doors, blinds and mouldings" per the Washtenaw County Atlas. In more recent history, the building was home to the Warehouse Furniture Store from 1932 to 1950, and Treasure Mart from 1960 to 2020.

The Historic District Commission approved an application for restoration of the building and changes shown on the proposed site plan at its August 23, 2021 meeting.

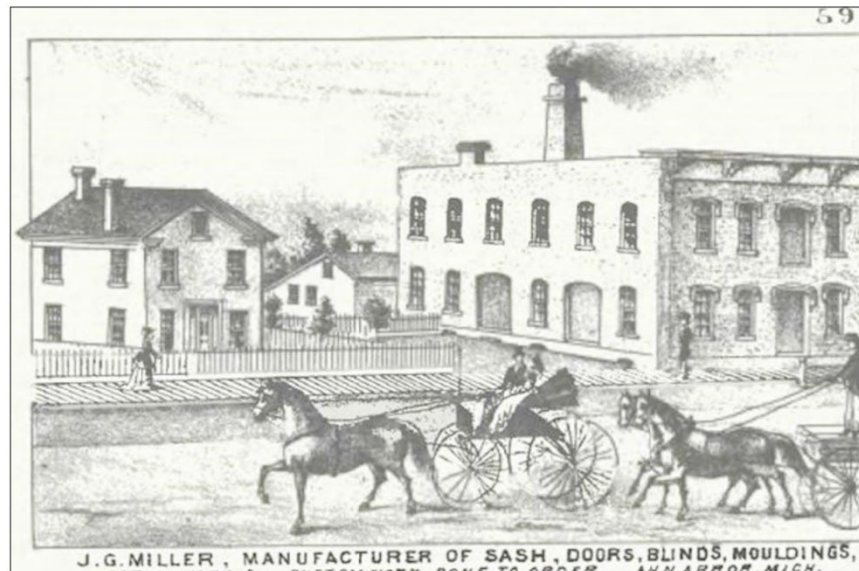


Figure 1. Site in 1874, courtesy Bentley Historical Library

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends that the **site plan**, including **landscape modifications** to remove a conflicting land use buffer requirement where the driveway is located along the northeast property line, be **approved with the condition that all outstanding staff comments are satisfactorily addressed** because, with the modifications, the contemplated development complies with all applicable state, local and federal laws, ordinances, standards and regulations; the development limits the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land; and the development does not cause a public or private nuisance and does not have a detrimental effect on the public health, safety or welfare. The landscape modifications meet the approval criteria set forth in Section 5.30.1 and are included in the motion of the approving body.

Staff also recommends that the special exception use be **approved with conditions** because the proposed special exception use is of such location, size and character as to be compatible with the zoning district in which the site is situated; and the location and size of the proposed use, its nature and intensity, the site layout and access, and effect of the proposed use on public services would not be hazardous or inconvenient to the neighborhood nor unduly conflict with the normal traffic of the neighborhood.

SITE PLAN APPLICATION:

Description – The site contains two historic buildings: a house that contains four apartments and a brick warehouse building. A 1,314 square foot addition is proposed on the north side elevation of the brick building and a one-way driveway is proposed to replace the canopy or shed attached to its north elevation.

- Landscape Modification -- The applicants have submitted a [landscape modification petition](#) per Section 5.30.1 to remove the requirement for a conflicting land use buffer along the northeast property line. This area has historically been used for a driveway and an attached shed structure and is proposed as a one-way drive along the property line and parallel to a neighboring driveway on the north. A conflicting land use buffer is provided along the west and south property boundaries. The petition states that “a rearrangement of the landscaping elements will achieve the spirit and intent of this chapter.”

Development Standards Review – Staff has reviewed the site plan for compliance with all applicable development standards of the R4C district provided in Chapter 55 [Unified Development Code](#). A summary of staff findings is provided in the chart below.

Development Standards Review Summary		
	PROPOSED	REQUIRED/ PERMITTED
Zoning District	R4C	R4C
Lot Area (Site)	22,160 SF	8,500 SF minimum
Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	4,432 SF	MIN 2,175 SF per dwelling unit
Dwelling Units	4	Up to 10 dwelling units
Density	2 dwelling units per acre	MAX 20 dwelling units/acre
Open Space	44% (9,780 SF)	MIN 40%
Active Open Space	570 SF per unit	540 SF per unit
Height	26 ft. 10 in.	MAX 30 ft.
Front Setback	5.3 ft (Existing Nonconforming)	MIN 25 ft.
Rear Setback	32.5 ft.	MIN 30.83 ft.
Northeast Side Setback	20.1 ft.	MIN 12.83 ft
Southwest Side Setback	18.4 ft.	MIN 12 ft.
Width Between Buildings	43.7 ft.	MIN 20 ft.
Vehicle Parking	17 spaces (15 standard + 2 barrier free)	MIN 0 spaces
Bicycle Parking	8 Class C	6 Class C (1 space per 50 seats, 300 seats/50)
EV Spaces	4 EV-C, 2 EV-R, 1 EV-I	30% EV-C (6), 5% EV-I (1)

SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE APPLICATION:

SEU Standards: The Planning Commission, in arriving at its decision relative to any application for a special exception, must apply the general criteria for approval provided in Section 5.29.5.D of the UDC, summarized and analyzed below.

- (a) City Master Plan: The Master Plan contains eight elements, adopted individually between 2009 and 2021. Together, the plan elements seek to guide the City towards sustainability, conservation, and increasing livability, affordability, transportation choices, and dense, mixed uses on vibrant, active, friendly streets. The proposed religious assembly use provides a service mainly to people living in the City, many within walking distance. It will adapt a historic industrial building for reuse and restore its historic character.

- (b) Compatibility with the general vicinity: Religious assembly compliments the surrounding residential neighborhood and restoration of the building will enhance the character of the site and vicinity.
- (c) Consistent with the neighborhood and not detrimental: The intensity and character of church use is consistent with the neighborhood. The intensity of the use will be limited by the size of the building.
- (d) Parking: The site provides seventeen parking spaces; none are required.
- (e) Pedestrian Safety: Public sidewalks are present along Detroit Street and adjoining streets.
- (f) Vehicular movement and traffic: The design, layout and location of the site and its parking lot and driveway adequately accommodate the proposed vehicular movement and traffic.
- (g) Natural Features: The proposed church will not impact any natural features.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Planning – The Comparison Chart on site plan Cover Sheet CO shows required vehicular parking. Because required parking was eliminated by a city ordinance that went into effect last week, this information needs to be corrected on sheet CO before the plans are sealed, if approved by City Planning Commission. Similarly, the percentage breakdowns of required electric vehicle (EV) spaces needs to be corrected, to 30% EV-C and 5% EV-I. The proposed EV Spaces meet this requirement.

Natural Resources – The Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Planning Coordinator supports the Landscape Modification request.

Prepared by Jill Thacher
Reviewed by Brett Lenart
9/14/22

Attachments: Zoning Map
Aerial Photo
[Special Exception Use Petition](#)
[Landscape Modification Petition](#)
[Site Plans Revised](#)
[Citizen Participation Report](#)
[Traffic Impact Study](#)

c: Owner and Applicant – Redeemer Church of Ann Arbor, 7500 Brookville Rd,
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Applicant's Engineer – Washtenaw Engineering (ikm@wengco.com)
Development Review Team
File