

## **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT**

**For the Planning Commission Meeting of January 21, 2021**

**SUBJECT: Lewis Jewelers Retail Plaza  
(300 South Maple Road)  
Site Plan for City Council Approval – Project No. SP20-022**

### **PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Lewis Jewelers Retail Plaza Site Plan subject to obtaining the required off-site private storm sewer easement and the off-site public water main easement prior to the issuance of any building permit.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends that the **site plan be approved** because 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.

### **HISTORY:**

This petition was postponed at the December 15, 2020 City Planning Commission meeting. The CPC expressed concerns with the proposed drive through use, solid waste location and pedestrian access to Maple Road. Staff reviewed the list of Planning Commission issues with the petitioner representatives after the last Planning Commission meeting. The petitioner's letter of response is copied below and revised plans have been submitted and reviewed.

### **CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS SUBMISSION**

#### **SITE PLAN PETITION:**

***Petitioner's response to Planning Commission concerns:*** *In response to feedback received from the Planning Commission, the drive-thru has been removed from the proposed project. The drive-thru itself has been replaced with doors into Suite #3, and the sidewalk has been reconfigured to provide pedestrian access along the south side of the building and a landscape island separating the sidewalk from the drive aisle. A*

*second sidewalk connection to the public sidewalk in the S Maple Road right-of-way has also been added near the southeast corner of the building. Due to the grades near this corner, this connection includes steps and handrails, however, the sidewalk connection near the northeast corner of the building is ADA compliant.*

*Additionally, we reviewed options for relocating the proposed trash/recycling enclosure. The enclosure must meet a variety of City criteria related to location and access, including the following:*

- The gate swing angle must be a minimum of 120 degrees from the closed position.*
- Gates should not impede on the required enclosure opening width, should not block adjacent parking spots, and not be impeded by adjacent curbs or landscaping.*
- A clearance of 5 feet on all sides of the enclosure must be maintained.*
- Front-load trucks must be able to negotiate the route to enter/exit the site and have clear access to the enclosure.*

*In addition to the City's criteria, the site itself presents some constraints in locating the trash/recycling enclosure.*

- A water main easement is located over the southern 44 feet of the site, and the enclosure cannot be placed within the easement. The enclosure is proposed at the northern limit of that easement and cannot be located any farther south.*
- An underground detention area is located beneath the parking lot east of the enclosure, so moving the enclosure any farther east than the edge of the proposed open space/lawn area would create conflict with the detention system.*
- In its proposed location, the enclosure is screened from S Maple Road by the proposed building. Relocating the enclosure to the north side of the site would make the enclosure visible to S Maple Road as well as to a larger number of tenants and patrons of the Westgate Shopping Center.*

*We worked closely with the City of Ann Arbor's Solid Waste and Recycling Program Coordinator during the site plan review process to balance the requirements, constraints, and general aesthetics, and believe that the proposed location is the best possible option. This location was also approved by the City during the site plan review process.*

#### **SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE:**

In response to Planning Commission concerns, the petitioner has eliminated the drive through use on the site and has subsequently withdrawn the Special Exception Use request.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

Transportation: The Traffic Engineer has reviewed the proposal and concluded that, this item should be considered by Planning Commission. The following is provided for their consideration.

The applicant was made aware of the City's policies that should be considered and addressed in the development of this site plan and transportation impact analysis. The City's complete streets policy, Non-Motorized Plan, and A2Zero plans were specifically indicated as well as the Transportation Plan progress and available work products. The transportation impact study has not fully considered these plans nor has it fully considered modes of transportation other than personal vehicles in the evaluation of the impacts this site will have. Additionally, the study has not properly accounted for fully-open Westgate tenants or the existing operation of the driveways without current construction closures.

Although the study continues to have areas of concern, the largest concerns regarding transportation impacts from the site have been addressed.

Transportation had significant concerns regarding the impacts a change in driveway operations would have on the area. Those concerns have been removed by the restoration of proposed operations to two-way travel on the southern driveway and the removal of the drive-through operation.

Planning: Planning staff discussed Planning Commission comments with the petitioner, the applicant's response is included above which addresses all items raised by the Planning Commission. Staff has confirmed with the Solid Waste Coordinator the proposed location of the solid waste facilities is the preferred location. Staff also received a [letter from Westgate](#) management supporting the current location.

The elimination of the drive through use resulted in only a minor change to the site plan layout, however the entire plan was reviewed and approved by City Staff.

Urban Forestry & Natural Resources: The changes to the landscape plan have been reviewed and are acceptable.

Prepared by Matt Kowalski  
Reviewed by Brett Lenart  
01/12/2021

Attachments: December 15, 2020 Staff Report with Zoning Map, Aerial Photo

Links:

[REVISED Site Plan](#)  
[Westgate letter](#)

c: Owner and Applicant – DNL Holdings, LLC, 2000 West Stadium Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI  
48103  
Applicant's Engineer – MCA (Chris Sutton)  
Petitioner: AR Brouwer (Steve Brouwer)  
Systems Planning  
Project Nos. SP20-022