

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT**

**For Planning Commission Meeting of July 17, 2012**

**SUBJECT: Chalmers Place Employee Parking Lot Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval and Landscape Modification Request (3365 Washtenaw Avenue) File No. SP12-017**

**PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed landscape modification according to Chapter 62 (Landscape and Screening Ordinance), Section 5:602 (2)(g).

**PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the Chalmers Place Employee Parking Lot Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval, subject to approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals to exceed the maximum number of parking spaces on site and reduction of the conflicting land use buffer width.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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

Staff recommends that the site plan be **approved** because, if the requested variances are granted, it would comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations; the development would not cause a public or private nuisance and would not have a detrimental effect on public health, safety or welfare. No natural features exist on site and none are proposed to be impacted off-site as a result of this proposal.

**LOCATION**

The site is located on the north side of Washtenaw Avenue, west of Chalmers Drive (Northeast Area). This site is located in the Malletts Creek watershed and is adjacent to the creek.

**DESCRIPTION OF PETITION**

In May 2012, the petitioner requested rezoning of 0.92-acre, vacant parcel directly north of this site from R1B (Single-Family Dwelling District) to P (Parking) and site plan approval to construct a 43-space parking lot for use by Chalmers Place employees. The City Planning Commission recommended denial of the rezoning, and the petitioner subsequently withdrew the petition.

The petitioner now proposes to increase the number of parking spaces on the shopping center site from 88 to 112, with the 24 additional spaces to be used mainly by employees of the retail/office center. These added spaces are proposed to be located along the north property line and off an existing service drive on the east side of the building. A variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals is required, as the maximum number of parking spaces permitted by Chapter 59, Off-Street Parking for a commercial center of this size is 100 parking spaces.

The petitioner proposes covering 5 of the bicycle hoop spaces located east of the Washtenaw Avenue entrance to provide the required Class B spaces. The proposed canopy structure is 7.5 feet above grade and will not impede sight distance for vehicles exiting the site.

The existing access drives off Washtenaw Avenue and Chalmers Drive will remain unchanged. A traffic study was conducted as part of the original site plan approval, which indicated the AM and PM traffic counts were anticipated to be slightly greater than the previous auto dealership use on the site. The approved retail uses were not anticipated to significantly impact the existing traffic conditions and the level of service was projected to remain constant for the impacted intersections at Chalmers Drive, Huron Parkway and Pittsfield Blvd. Adding 24 additional parking spaces for employees does not change the traffic circulation or level of service.

The total amount of impervious surface on site will increase by approximately 2,500 square feet to accommodate the new parking. The proposed storm water detention facilities will meet the 100-year storm water detention requirements by connecting an additional underground storm pipe to the existing underground storm system located at the northwestern edge of the parking lot and will continue to outlet into the storm water pipe located in Washtenaw Avenue.

A 10-foot wide landscape buffer will be provided between the new parking spaces and the Chalmers Drive right-of-way. No change is proposed to the interior landscaping islands. An existing conflicting land use buffer along the northern property line will be reconfigured to taper down from 15 feet to 4 feet to accommodate the additional parking spaces. The petitioners propose to dedicate a 15 foot wide conservation easement on their residential property to the north to meet the intent of the conflicting land use buffer width. This reduction from the conflicting land use buffer width requires a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Under the 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 and the modification is associated with 5:608 (2) (a)- (d). The petitioner is requesting a modification to the following:

- Interior landscaping requirements: 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. The petitioner is requesting relief from this requirement as the stormwater is currently pretreated and the existing grades and drainage patterns make it impractical to create functional recessed islands on this developed site.

The petitioner held a public meeting with the neighbors on Monday, June 18, 2012 to discuss the proposed parking variance and site plan for additional parking spaces. No comments or concerns were received by the petitioner or staff at the time this staff report was written.

### COMPARISON CHART

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	PERMITTED/REQUIRED
Zoning	C3 (Fringe Commercial District)	C3	C3
Gross Lot Area	96,123 sq ft	96,123 sq ft	6,000 sq ft MIN
Maximum Usable Floor Area in Percentage of Lot Area	26,237 sq ft 27%	26,237 sq ft 27%	192,246 sq ft MAX 200%
Setbacks	Front – Washtenaw Ave	40 ft *	10 ft MIN 25 ft MAX
	Front – Chalmers Dr	40 ft *	10 ft MIN 25 ft MAX
	Side(s)	57 ft	None
	Rear	42 ft	30 ft MIN abutting residential
Building Height	34.6 ft	34.6 ft	55 ft
Parking - Automobiles	88 spaces	112 spaces **	84 spaces MIN 100 spaces MAX
Parking – Bicycles	10 spaces – Class C	5 spaces – Class B 5 spaces – Class C	5 spaces MIN - Class B 5 spaces MIN - Class C

\*Existing non-conforming

\*\* Variance requested

### SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USES	ZONING
NORTH	Vacant	R1B (Single-Family Dwelling District)
EAST	Restaurant	C3 (Fringe Commercial District)
SOUTH	Commercial/Retail Buildings	C3
WEST	Auto Repair	C3

### HISTORY

The building was constructed in 1965 based on an approved site plan. In 1968, the Planning Commission approved an addition to the service area of the automobile dealership. A site plan for a drive-in reception area serviced by a curb cut on Chalmers Drive was submitted in 1984 and later withdrawn after neighbors voiced opposition to the Chalmers Drive curb cut. A petition for a 2,896-square foot customer service addition was withdrawn in 1988.

The Chalmers Place Retail site was approved in 2005 for a 26,237-square foot office/retail building, which was subsequently constructed. A proposal to rezone the vacant lot to the north from residential to parking was recommended for denial at the May, 2012 City Planning Commission meeting and was subsequently withdrawn by the petitioner.

## **PLANNING BACKGROUND**

The Master Plan: Land Use Element future land use recommends commercial uses for this site. Other urban design goals of the Plan include: encouraging landscaping of parking areas and buffers between land uses; relocating parking out of the front open space areas; minimizing off-street parking lots and encouraging design so that the parking lot is not the dominant feature from the road.

The Plan goes on to state minimizing the amount of unnecessary parking spaces helps improve water quality by minimizing unnecessary imperviousness, utilizes land more efficiently, reduces the amount of heat generated from parking lots, and fosters a more pedestrian friendly environment. The use of shared and deferred parking should be provided where possible. Parking lot lighting should be turned down at night and directed so it does not flow off-site.

The Non-motorized Transportation Plan calls for sidewalks along both Washtenaw Avenue and Chalmers Drive along with bicycle lanes on both sides of Washtenaw Avenue.

### **Landscape Modification: 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).

Petitioner responses in *italics*

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.

*Stormwater is treated in an existing mechanical pre-treatment structure. This project is a modification of an existing parking lot to add parking and only two new parking lot islands are proposed, neither of which could be designed to receive significant runoff since the proposed grades and drainage patterns are limited by the necessity to tie into the grades of the existing parking lot. Drainage patterns cannot be adjusted in a manner that will create functional recessed islands.*

*Regrading of the site to meet bioretention requirements would damage the existing landscaping on site. Modifying the landscaping preserves the existing trees & shrubs on site and meets the spirit of the Code.*

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

*The modifications are consistent with the intent of the Chapter 62, Landscape and Screening Ordinance. Stormwater pre-treatment is provided on site in an existing mechanical structure.*

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Urban Forest and Natural Resource Planning - Staff supports the requested landscape modification from the requirement that 50% of the interior landscape islands be depressed, based on information provided by the petitioner that the storm water is pre-treated in an existing mechanical structure and that, with the topography of the site, the water would not drain to the depressed bioretention areas.

Malletts Creek Coordinating Committee – The previously submitted petition for 2090 Chalmers Drive showed disturbance within the required natural features open space. It would be far less environmentally damaging to provide additional parking on the Chalmers Place site than expanding onto the adjacent parcel to the north as proposed. Parking spaces could be provided on the north side of the Chalmers Place site while providing the required 15 foot conflicting land use buffer on the parcel to the north, and do a land combination. This would require far less impervious area and preserve most of the vegetation on the northern parcel. If additional parking is justified, alternatives to providing it on the northern parcel should be pursued.

Planning – Staff supports exceeding the maximum allowable parking spaces by 12 (100 maximum and 112 proposed). The proposed parking spaces follow the recommendations of the Malletts Creek Coordinating Committee by proposing additional parking on site and not impacting natural features on the adjacent northern site. While the total amount of impervious surface on site increases by approximately 2,500 square feet, it will be detained with a new underground storm pipe meeting 100-year storm regulations. The petitioner has also demonstrated a need for additional parking spaces as the existing office and commercial spaces have been vacant since the retail center was constructed.

Staff supports the landscape modification as stated in the Urban Forest and Natural Resources Manager comments. Regrading the site to incorporate bioretention in the landscape islands would also damage the existing landscaping on site.

Staff also supports the requested Conflicting Land Use Buffer variance because sufficient screening is proposed on site to screen the proposed additional parking spaces from the residences to the north. In addition to this screening, the petitioner proposes placing a 15-wide conservation easement on their adjacent, residentially zoned property to the north. This easement will protect natural features if development were to occur on this site, which includes landmark and woodland trees.

Prepared by Christopher Cheng  
Reviewed by Wendy Rampson  
mg/7/12/12

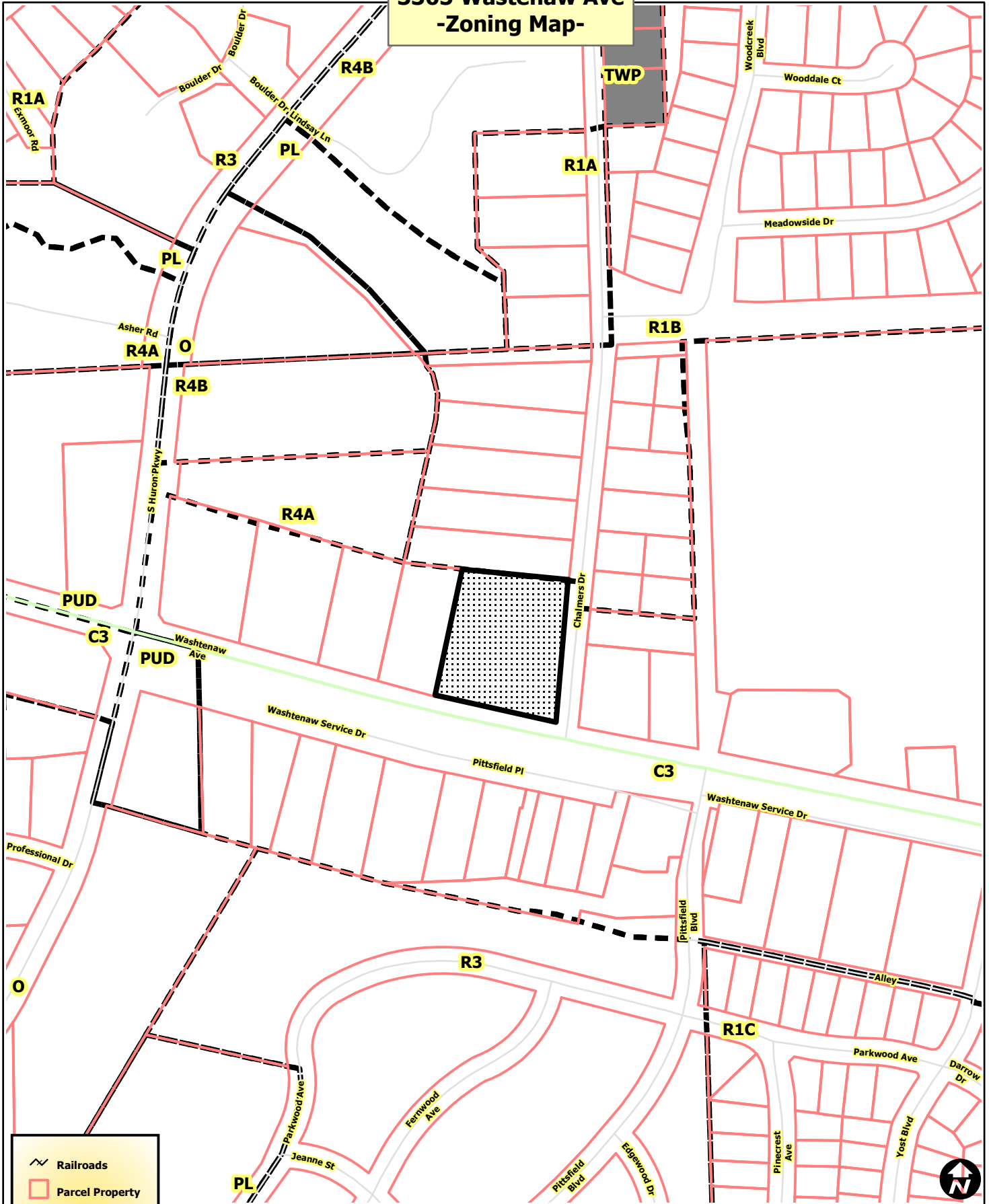
Attachments: Zoning/Parcel Maps  
Aerial Photo  
Site Plan  
Landscape Plan

c: Owner: L.P.N. Properties II, LLC  
5000 East Grand River  
Howell, MI 48843

Petitioners Representative: Kevin Travers, Property Manager  
5000 East Grand River  
Howell, MI 48843

Systems Planning  
File No. SP12-017

# 3365 Wastenaw Ave -Zoning Map-



Railroads  
 Parcel Property  
**Zoning**  
 Township  
 Zoning



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# 3365 Wastenaw Ave -Aerial Map-



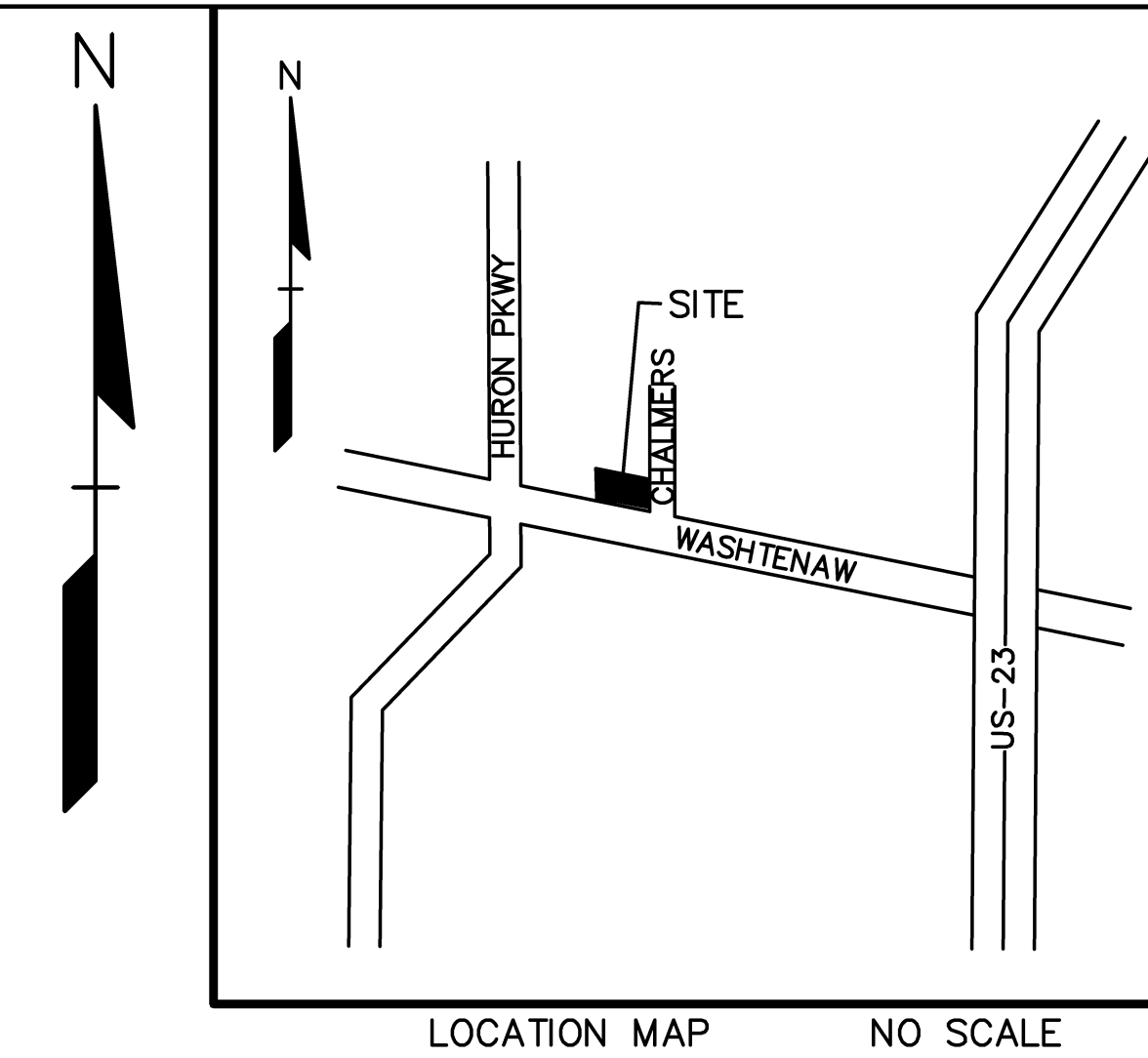
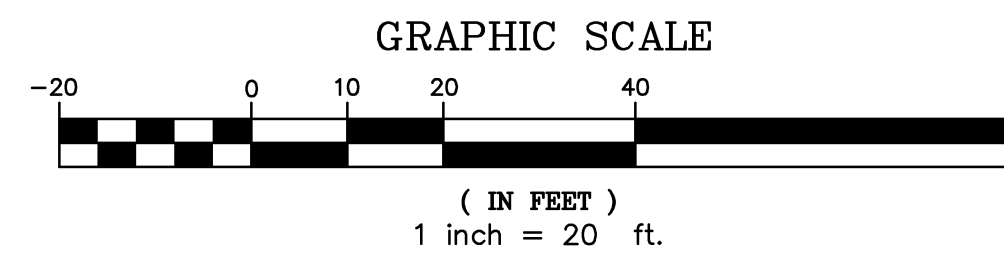
-  Railroads
-  Parcel Property



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 Map Created: 6/1/2012



**BENCHMARKS:**  
 BM#1 - NE BOLT ON LIGHT POLE AT SOUTHEAST CORNER OF PROPERTY. ELEVATION = 811.92 NAVD88  
 BM#2 - NE BOLT ON LIGHT POLE AT SOUTH PROPERTY LINE. ELEVATION = 802.60 NAVD88



NO.	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION
1	7/25/14	JTS	REVISED PER CITY REVIEW COMMENTS
2	8/26/14	JTS	REVISED PER CITY REVIEW COMMENTS
3	9/11/14	JTS	REVISED PER CITY REVIEW COMMENTS
4	10/1/14	JTS	REVISED PER CITY REVIEW COMMENTS
5	10/1/14	JTS	REVISED PER CITY REVIEW COMMENTS
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**SITE DATA**

OWNER:  
 L.P.N. PROPERTIES, LLC  
 5000 E. GRAND RIVER AVE.  
 HOWELL, MICHIGAN 48843  
 PH (517) 546-8800

BUILDING ADDRESS:  
 3365 WASHTEAW AVE  
 ANN ARBOR, MI 48104

ZONED C3 - FRINGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

RETAIL CENTER / OFFICE  
 BUILDING AREA =  
 1st FLOOR = 23,237 sq.ft. RETAIL  
 2nd FLOOR = 3,000 sq.ft. OFFICE

**COMPARISON CHART**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED
PARKING AUTOMOBILE	88 SPACES	112 SPACES	MAX - 100 MIN - 84
PARKING BICYCLE	CLASS A - 0 CLASS B - 0 CLASS C - 10	CLASS A - 0 CLASS B - 5 CLASS C - 5	CLASS A - 0 CLASS B - 5 CLASS C - 4

**PARKING CALCULATIONS:**

RETAIL SPACE  
 1 SPACE / 310 SF OF RETAIL MIN  
 1 SPACE / 285 SF OF RETAIN MAX.

23,237 / 310 = 75 SPACES MIN.  
 23,237 / 285 = 88 SPACE MAX.

OFFICE SPACE  
 1 SPACE / 333 SF OF OFFICE SF MIN.  
 1 SPACE / 250 SF OF OFFICE SF MAX.

3000 / 333 = 9 SPACES MIN.  
 3000 / 250 = 12 SPACE MAX.

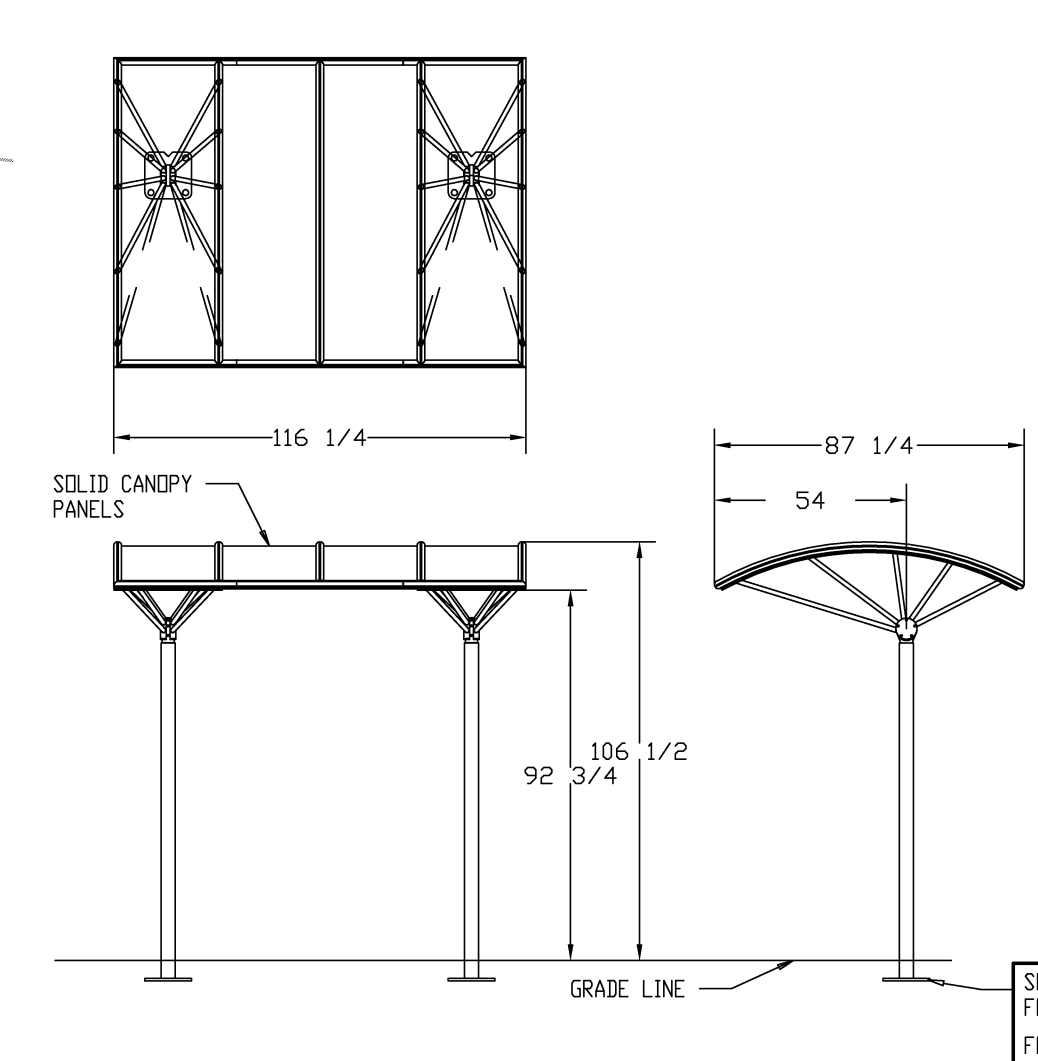
TOTAL MIN. SPACES = 84  
 TOTAL MAX. SPACE = 100

IMPERVIOUS SURFACE ADDITION 2,533 SF

- GENERAL NOTES:**
- THESE NOTES APPLY TO ALL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES ON THIS PROJECT.
- ALL DIMENSIONS SHOWN ARE TO BACK OF CURB, FACE OF SIDEWALK, OUTSIDE FACE OF BUILDING, PROPERTY LINE, CENTER OF MANHOLE/CATCH BASIN OR CENTERLINE OF PIPE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.
  - REFER TO SHEET P-5.0 FOR ON-SITE PAVING DETAILS.
  - NO PARKING-FIRE LANE SIGNS SHALL BE POSTED ALONG ALL FIRE LANES AT 100 FOOT INTERVALS OR AS DIRECTED BY THE FIRE OFFICIAL.
  - ALL CONSTRUCTION SHALL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY OF ANN ARBOR CURRENT STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS.
  - THE CONTRACTOR SHALL NOTIFY THE CITY ENGINEER AND/OR THE AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION 3 BUSINESS DAYS PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF CONSTRUCTION.
  - ANY WORK WITHIN THE STREET OR HIGHWAY RIGHT-OF-WAYS SHALL BE PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE AGENCIES HAVING JURISDICTION AND SHALL NOT BEGIN UNTIL ALL NECESSARY PERMITS HAVE BEEN ISSUED FOR THE WORK.
  - IT SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONTRACTOR TO ADJUST THE TOP OF ALL EXISTING AND PROPOSED STRUCTURES (MANHOLES, CATCH BASINS, INLETS, GATE WELLS ETC.) WITHIN GRADED AND/OR PAVED AREAS TO FINAL GRADE SHOWN ON THE PLANS. ALL SUCH ADJUSTMENTS SHALL BE INCIDENTAL TO THE JOB AND WILL NOT BE PAID FOR SEPARATELY.

**PUBLIC SIDEWALK NOTE:**

PER CHAPTER 49, SECTION 4-58 OF THE CITY CODE, "ALL SIDEWALKS ARE TO BE KEPT AND MAINTAINED IN GOOD REPAIR BY THE OWNER OF THE LAND ADJACENT TO AND ABUTTING THE SAME, PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE FINAL CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY FOR THIS SITE. ALL EXISTING SIDEWALKS IN NEED OF REPAIR MUST BE REPAIRED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CITY STANDARDS."



**LEGEND**

EXISTING	PROPOSED
● IRON FOUND	● BRASS PLUG SET
⊗ IRON SET	⊗ MONUMENT FOUND
⊗ NAIL FOUND	⊗ MONUMENT SET
⊗ NAIL & CAP SET	⊗ SEC. CORNER FOUND
○ OH-ELEC-W/O	○ R RECORDED
○ OH-ELEC-W/○	○ M MEASURED
○ OH-US-PHONE	○ C CALCULATED
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ ELEC. PHONE OR CABLE TV O.H. LINE, POLE & GUY WIRE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ TELEPHONE U.S. CABLE, PEDESTAL & MANHOLE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ ELECTRIC U.S. CABLE, MANHOLE, METER & HANDHOLE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ GAS MAIN, VALVE & GAS LINE MARKER
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ WATERMAN, HYD. GATE VALVE, TAPPING SLAVE & VALVE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ SANITARY SEWER, CLEANOUT & MANHOLE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ STORM SEWER, CLEANOUT & MANHOLE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ COMBINED SEWER & MANHOLE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ CATCH BASIN
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ INLET (NO INCOMING LINES)
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ YARD DRAIN (2" DIA. & SMALLER)
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ POST INDICATOR VALVE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ WATER VALVE BOX/HYDRANT VALVE BOX, SERVICE SHUTOFF
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ MANHOLE, TRANSFORMER, IRRIGATION CONTROL VALVE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ UNIDENTIFIED STRUCTURE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ SPOT ELEVATION
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ AS BUILT ELEVATION
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ CONTOUR LINE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ FENCE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ GUARD RAIL
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ STREET LIGHT
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ SIGN
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ CONCRETE
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ ASPHALT
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ HEAVY DUTY
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ WETLAND
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ GRAVEL SHOULDER
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ STANDARD
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ HEAVY DUTY
○ OH-ELEC-○	○ DEEP STRENGTH

**CAUTION!**  
 THE LOCATIONS AND ELEVATIONS OF EXISTING UNDERGROUND UTILITIES AS SHOWN ON THIS DRAWING ARE ONLY APPROXIMATE. NO GUARANTEE IS MADE FOR THE COMPLETENESS OR ACCURACY THEREOF. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE EXACT UTILITY LOCATIONS AND ELEVATIONS PRIOR TO THE START OF CONSTRUCTION.

THIS DRAWING AND DESIGN ARE THE PROPERTY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, INC. THEY ARE NOT TO BE USED, REPRODUCED, COPIED, OR WHOLE OR IN PART, OR USED FOR PUBLISHING INFORMATION TO OTHERS, WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF PEAT CONSULTING ENGINEERS ASSOCIATES, INC. ALL COMMON LAW RIGHTS OF COPYRIGHT AND OTHERWISE ARE HEREBY SPECIFICALLY RESERVED. © 2011 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, INC.

CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR AGREES THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES, CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE TO ASSUME SOLE AND COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY FOR JOB SITE CONDITIONS DURING THE COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION. CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL PERSONS AND PROPERTY THAT THE REQUIREMENT SHALL BE MADE TO APPLY CONTRACTORS AND NOT BE LIMITED TO NORMAL WORKING HOURS AND CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR FURTHER AGREES TO DEFEND, ROYALTY AND HOLD DESIGN PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY, REAL OR ALIENED, IN CONNECTION WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF WORK ON THIS PROJECT EXCEPT LIABILITY ASSUMED FROM THE SOLE NEGLIGENCE OF THE DESIGN PROFESSIONAL.

**3 FULL WORKING DAYS BEFORE YOU DIG CALL**

**811**  
 Know what's below  
 Call before you dig  
 Miss Dig System, Inc.  
 1-800-482-7171 www.missdig.net  
 (TOLL FREE)

**PEAT**

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES  
 2900 E. GRAND RIVER AVE.  
 HOWELL, MI 48843  
 Phone: (517) 546-8583  
 Fax: (517) 546-8973  
 website: www.peatinc.com

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**SITE PLAN**  
 CHALMERS PLACE EMPLOYEE PARKING LOT I  
 2090 CHALMERS DRIVE, MICHIGAN  
 ANN ARBOR, WASHTEAWAY COUNTY, MICHIGAN

DES. JC DN. RMS SUR. PEAT P.M. JTS  
 © View: 2011\001119 CHALMERS PLACE PARKING - (JTS)DWG (P-2.0) SITE PLAN.dwg

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