

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of March 21, 2023

**SUBJECT: Platt Road Townhomes Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval & Wetland Use Permit (3680, 3696, 3746 & 3788 Platt Road)
File Nos. SP22-2016 & WUP22-001**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the Platt Road Townhomes Site Plan and recommends approval of the Development Agreement, as the site plan complies with all applicable requirements of the Unified Development Code, and other applicable laws, ordinances, standards, and regulations and based upon the following conditions:

- All parcels must be combined before issuance of any Building Permits.
- Final approval from the Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioner.

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Planning Commission approves the Wetland Use Permit for the Platt Road Townhomes project site plan.

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed landscape modifications according to Chapter 55 Unified Development Code, Section 5.20.10B, to require one tree for Right of Way screening every 45 feet.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the site plan be **approved** because it would comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations; and the development would limit the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land.

Staff recommends that the wetland use permit be **approved** because issuance of the permit is in the public interest, the permit is necessary to realize the benefits from the development, and the activity is otherwise lawful.

Staff recommends the landscape modification be **approved** because planting or installing required landscaping and screening materials would be more detrimental to existing vegetation and would result in conditions less desirable or effective for landscaping and screening than if located and spaced as required.

STAFF REPORT

This site plan petition was postponed by the Planning Commission at the petitioner's request at the August 16, 2022 meeting to allow additional time for the petitioner to submit a revised site plan requesting additional density at this site.

Previously, the petitioner proposed combining four R3 (Townhouse Dwelling District) zoned vacant parcels totaling 8.1-acres to develop 43 townhouse units. The revised site plan increases the number of townhouse units to 78, which is a permitted use in this zoning district. This increase in units was accomplished by reducing the square footage of each unit while maintaining the building footprints throughout the site. This site continues to be accessed from two curb cuts off Platt Road and is to be constructed in one phase.

The road layout, grading, utility main lines and trees removed remain unchanged from the previous submittal.

Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the proposed interior streets and connecting to sidewalk fronting Platt Road. Interior crosswalks also connect this development internally.

Each residential unit provides a one-car garage with wiring in the garages for residents to install EV charging stations. Bicycle parking is also proposed in the garages. A parkland request of \$48,750 has been accepted and confirmed by the developer (based on 78 dwelling units) to be used for area parks.

This site falls under the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioner's Office for storm water detention review and is required to meet the first flush, bank full and 100-year storm water detention requirements. Infiltration testing was performed and determined this site was unsuitable for infiltration and will be providing storage for 120% of the 100-year storm event. Two detention basins are proposed on the north and south areas of the site. The south detention basin will discharge into the existing storm sewer system located in the Platt Road R.O.W. and the north detention basin discharges into the Swift Run drain.

There are 10 landmark trees on site with 6 proposed to be removed totaling 107-inch DBH (diameter at breast height) inches removed. As required by code, 50% of the trees DBH must be replaced totaling 54 inches. This is met by planting 27 mitigation trees concentrated along the west property line and the center of the site. A total of 208 trees greater than 8-inches are proposed to be removed totaling 1,591- DBH inches, most of which are smaller Box Elder, Mulberry, Maple, Cottonwood and Willow trees. There are no defined woodlands on site and no mitigation is required for removal of these trees as they are not regulated protected natural features.

Due to the limited growing space in the Platt Road right-of-way, a landscape modification has been requested to plant the required street trees outside of the right-of-way along Platt Road. Conflicting land use buffers are proposed along the north and south property lines to screen from adjacent residential zoning.

There are three wetlands located along the north and south property lines and one located in the center of the site. Boring under this wetland is also proposed to connect to sanitary sewer. These impacts require approval of a wetland use permit. No structures are proposed in the wetlands or their 25-foot wide wetland buffer.

A development agreement has been drafted to address the Parks and tree mitigation contributions.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Residences & Church	R1C (Single-Family Residential District)
EAST	Townhomes	R3 (Townhouse Dwelling District)
SOUTH	Vacant	R2A (Two-Family Dwelling District)
WEST	Drainage District	PL (Public Land)

COMPARISON CHART

		EXISTING	PROPOSED	PERMITTED/REQUIRED
Zoning		R3 (Townhouse District)	R3	R3
Gross Lot Area		354,512 sq ft (8.14 acres)	354,512 sq ft (8.14 acres)	21,780 sq ft MIN
Lot Width		750 ft	750 ft	120 ft MIN
Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling Unit		NA	4,545 sq ft	4,300 sq ft
Minimum Open Space		Vacant	73%	65%
Minimum Active Open Space/Unit		NA	1,540 sq ft.	300 sq ft.
Setbacks	Front	NA	16.6 ft	15 ft MIN 40 ft MAX
	Side(s)	NA	49.1 ft – north 110.5 ft - south	28.5 ft*
	Rear	NA	34.1 ft	30 ft
Building Height		NA	32 ft (3 stories)	35 ft
Parking - Automobiles		NA	86 spaces	86 spaces MIN (2 spaces/dwelling)
EV Parking		NA	78 EVC spaces	100% EV-C/garage
Parking – Bicycles		NA	Provided in garage	1 space/dwelling

*Minimum required side setback shall be increased 1.5 inches for each foot of building length over 50 feet.

HISTORY & PLANNING BACKGROUND

The site previously contained two single-family residences, apparently constructed before 1947 and were removed in the in the '70's and 80's. A proposal on two of the lots were submitted for R3 zoning and site plan review in 2000. Additional land was acquired and this proposal was revised into a planned project site plan with 44 single-family attached dwelling units on a 5.7-acre site and was tabled by the City Planning Commission in July 2001.

A public hearing was held August 21, 2002, for the annexation of 1.6 acres, which was a portion of the 5.7 acre site that was discovered to be in the Township. Planning Commission recommended approval for the annexation, but tabled action on the zoning and site plan. The petitioner then acquired an additional 1.87-acre parcel of land at 3680 Platt Road for a total of 7.57 acres and again submitted a revised plan for the entire site. This petition was tabled at the October 15, 2002, Commission meeting as was subsequently revised and presented at the March 16, 2004 Commission meeting where the R3 zoning and site plan were recommended to be denied. The petitioner decided to revise the plans and request re-review of the site plan by Commission before going to City Council. A revised site plan and rezoning was approved by City Council in December 2005. This site plan expired and was never constructed.

The Master Plan: Land Use Element states public/semi-public uses are recommended for this site. Additional goals for the South Area include:

- Providing a variety of housing types, ownership types and costs;
- Promoting infill housing in neighborhoods which can accommodate additional density;
- Promoting the availability of housing to accommodate people with disabilities;
- Providing adequate pedestrian and vehicular access to public streets and sidewalks between neighborhoods; and
- Providing adequate parkland or open space in residential developments along with other amenities such as lighting, landscaping, play equipment, and street furniture, all scaled to pedestrian level.

The Ann Arbor Moving Together Toward Vision Zero shows Platt Road as part of the proposed bike network. Bicycle lanes and sidewalks currently exist on both sides of Platt Road.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Parks - The formula for a park contribution to offset the population being brought to this part of town for 78 units is \$48,750. The petitioner has acknowledged paying this contribution.

Systems Planning – The mitigation calculations for the increase in sanitary sewer flow have been reviewed and are approved. Flow equivalent to 72 GPM, will need to be removed from the sanitary sewer system in order to mitigate new flow from this proposed development. Alternatively, a payment in lieu of performing actual flow removal may be made.

Office of Sustainability & Innovations (OSI) - See attached comments.

Forestry – Staff does not have concerns with the wetland use permit and supports the landscape modification for street trees along Platt Road.

Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner – This office has reviewed the site plans for this project. The design plans are technically correct and do not require revisions at this time.

Planning – Staff supports the increased number of dwelling units proposed as the layout of the project is unchanged from the previously submitted site plan and meets the density requirements of the Townhouse Dwelling district. The increase in units has not further impacted the activity in the three wetland and 25-foot-wide buffer areas and remain minimal as does the impacts to landmark trees remain minimal compared to the submitted alternatives analysis.

Staff supports the development of this site into a townhouse development as it follows the recommendation of the Master Plan: Land Use Element. This proposal also provides open space for residents and pedestrian connections to the proposed public sidewalk.

Prepared by Christopher Cheng
Reviewed by Brett D. Lenart
mg/03/10/23

Attachments: Zoning Map
Aerial Photo
[Site Plan/elevations](#)
Draft Development Agreement

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Project Management
Systems Planning
File Nos. WUP22-001 & SP22-2016