

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of May 16, 2018

**SUBJECT: 321 North Main Street Planned Project Site Plan for City Council Approval
Project No. SP18-009**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the 321 North Main Street Site Plan with planned project modifications to increase the maximum height limit to 69 feet 7 inches and reduce the minimum front setback to 6 feet 8 inches for a 7-foot 10-inch wide vestibule, subject to maintaining an energy conserving design and a minimum of 20% open space, and Development Agreement.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the **site plan** be **approved**, because the contemplated development would comply with all applicable state, local, and federal law, ordinances, standards and regulations; and the development would not cause a public or private nuisance, limits the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land, and would not have a detrimental effect on the public health, safety or welfare.

Staff recommends the **planned project modifications** are **approved** because the additional height and partially reduced front setback will provide an energy conserving design, increased side and rear setbacks, increased open space, and a reduced need for infrastructure.

LOCATION:

This site is located on the west side of North Main Street between Catherine and West Kingsley streets. It is in the Downtown Development Authority district and Ward One.

SUMMARY:

The applicant seeks site plan approval to construct a new six-story mixed use building with commercial and personal services on the first and second floors, office use on the third floor, and residential apartments on the fourth, fifth and sixth floors. A parking garage is located in the basement, accessed from the rear alley. Planned project modifications are requested to allow increased height and an encroachment into the front setback area.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

Existing Conditions – The site is vacant, its two previous buildings were demolished two years ago, and has 8,225 square feet. It is zoned D2 (Downtown Interface) and Kerrytown character overlay, and Front Yard street frontage designation.

Proposed Development – The proposed site plan includes a 30,917-square foot, 69' 7" tall, six-story building with commercial uses, office uses, 18 apartments, plus vehicle, bicycle and motorcycle parking spaces.

The proposed FAR is 376% and includes premium floor area from the residential use option and the green building premium option to exceed the normal maximum FAR of 200%.

Area, height, placement, and off-street parking data is provided in the comparison chart below. Other development details include:

- Average Front Setback – While the street frontage designation across this site is “front yard,” which requires a 15-foot minimum setback, the Zoning Ordinance also allows the average front setback to be used if that is less than the minimum required. In this case, the average front setback of the block is eight feet. An eight-foot setback is proposed for most of the building front except for a 7' 10" wide vestibule that encroaches 1' 6" into the front setback (having a setback of 6' 8"). The encroachment is included in the planned project modification request.
- Landmark Trees – There are no landmark trees on the site but there are two within 50 feet of the site. A 20-inch landmark locust street tree in front of the site will remain and be protected during construction. A 19-inch landmark sycamore street tree in front of the adjacent site will not be impacted. A second, non-landmark street tree in front of the site (19-inch Norway maple) will be removed and replaced with a new street tree after construction.
- Parking – Off-street parking is required for the premium floor area. The required spaces are provided in a garage below the building.
- Access – The site fronts North Main Street and has access to a public alley at the rear. The main building entrance is on North Main. Vehicular access is only available from the alley.
- Storm Water Management – Storm water management for the first flush volume is required. Storm water will be stored in an underground tank and released at the required rate following the required delay.
- Mixed Uses – A mix of health and wellness related commercial uses are proposed on the first and second floors. The third floor will be the offices of Robert Darvis Associates.
- Apartment Units – Eighteen apartments are proposed for the upper three floors; 15 one bedroom units and 3 two-bedroom units.
- Green Building Features – The proposed development uses the green building premium option for additional floor area. LEED Silver certification is assumed and Gold may even be earned. The development will utilize geo-thermal heating and cooling, an alternative rooftop solar array, and high R exterior envelope with minimal thermal breaks in addition to high efficiency windows, heating and cooling systems in accordance with LEED standards.
- Parkland Contribution – The applicant has declined to make a \$11,250 parkland contribution, in keeping with the formula for 18 proposed dwelling units expressed in the PROS Plan. The applicant will replace the three deteriorated wooden benches with more durable, composite plastic models in nearby North Main Park.

COMPARISON CHART:

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED/PERMITTED
Base Zoning	D2 (Downtown Core)	D2 (Downtown Core)	D2 (Downtown Core)
Lot Area	8,225 sq ft	8,225 sq ft	No minimum
Max. Usable Floor Area in % of Lot Area		376% (30,917 sq ft)	200% MAX normal (16,450 sq ft MAX) Up to 400% MAX with premiums (up to 32,900 sq ft MAX)
Premiums		14,467 sq ft additional floor area from residential and green building options	Up to 16,450 sq ft additional floor area
Building Coverage		70%	80% MAX
Open Space		22%	10% MIN
Character Overlay District	Kerrytown	Kerrytown	Kerrytown
Streetwall Height		2 and 3 stories	2 stories MIN 3 stories MAX
Offset at Top of Streetwall		5 ft	5 ft AVERAGE
Building Height		69' 7" (Planned Project requested)	60 ft MAX
Massing Articulation		40 ft	40 ft MAX
Side, Rear Setbacks		3' 7" North side 3' 4" South side 12' rear	None
Building Frontages	Front Yard Street	Front Yard Street	Front Yard Street
North Main Street		8' to 6' 7" (Planned Project requested)	Average of Existing (8 ft)
Parking	Special Parking District	Special Parking District	Special Parking District
Parking – Automobiles		16 spaces	15 spaces MIN (1 space per 1,000 sq ft premium floor area MIN)
Parking – Bicycles		16 Class A, 13 Class B, 6 Class C	7 Class A, 7 Class C
Parking – Motorcycles		2	None

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING:

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Downtown Mixed Use	D2 (Downtown Interface)
EAST	Downtown Commercial	D2
SOUTH	Downtown Commercial	D2
WEST	Downtown Mixed Use	D2

PLANNED PROJECT MODIFICATIONS:

Planned project modifications provide an added degree of flexibility in the placement and interrelationship of buildings. Modifications to the area, height and placement requirements may be approved if the project would result in a) the preservation of natural features, b) additional open space, c) greater building or parking setbacks, d) energy conserving design, e) preservation of historic or architectural features, f) affordable housing, or g) a beneficial arrangement of buildings.

Requested Modifications – The applicant requests these modifications:

- An increase in the maximum height permitted from 60 feet to 69 feet 7 inches.
- A decrease in the minimum front setback required from 8 feet (the existing average front setback within 100 feet of the site) to 6 feet 7 inches for a 7-foot 10-inch wide vestibule.

Approval Standards – The Planning Commission may recommend approval and City Council may approve modifications based on compliance with the following standards:

1. The lot(s) included in the planned project must meet the minimum gross lot size requirement of the zoning district in which they are located.
2. The proposed modifications of zoning requirements must provide one or more of the following: a) excess open space; b) excess building or parking setbacks; c) exceeding natural feature preservation requirements; d) preservation of historical or architectural features; e) solar orientation or energy conserving design; f) an arrangement of buildings that provides a public benefit; g) affordable housing; h) permanent open space in the R1A district.
3. The planned project shall be designed in such a manner that traffic to and from the site will not be hazardous to adjacent properties.
4. The proposed modifications shall be consistent with the proper development and use of adjacent land and buildings.
5. Required off-street parking and landscaping must be provided in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 59 and 62.

6. The standards of density, allowable floor area and required open space for the zoning district(s) in which the project is located must be met.
7. There shall be no uses within the proposed project which are not permitted uses in the zoning district(s) in which the proposed project is to be located.

Justifications – The applicant’s justifications for the planned project modifications are contained in the [petition](#), on Sheet Z1 of the [site plan](#), and are summarized below.

- The increased height enables solar orientation and energy conserving design.
- Building setbacks, specifically the side and rear setbacks, are in excess of the minimum required.
- Open space beyond the minimum required is provided.
- The proposed building arrangement provides easy access to transit, pedestrian orientation and a reduced need for infrastructure.
- The development also provides, outside of the approval criteria, reinforcement of active streets and a mixture of land uses, excellence in urban design, and sustainable construction and development.

Staff Findings – Staff find that the request to increase the building height standard and decrease a portion of the front setback requirement are in compliance with the standards for approval for all of the reasons stated by the applicant.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD REVIEW:

Design plans were seen and discussed by the Design Review Board on September 20, 2017 and February 21, 2018. Overall, the Design Review Board found the design to meet the intent and recommendations of the Downtown Design Guidelines. The architectural drawings submitted as part of the site plan are consistent with the design plan discussed by the Design Review Board.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

The petitioner held a meeting for interested citizens on February 12, 2018. Invitations were sent to all residents and property owners within 1,000 feet of the site. Thirteen persons attended. The full [report](#) provided by the petitioner is attached. In general, the discussion at the meeting concerned describing the proposed development and clarifying questions.

HISTORY:

The site was rezoned as part of the Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A2D2) zoning initiative. The current base and character overlay zoning districts and building frontage standards became effective in December 2009.

Site plans for a bath house were approved in 2016 but were not developed.

SERVICE UNIT COMMENTS:

Planning – Comments made during the review process have been addressed by revised plans. A development agreement is needed to address the alternative parkland contribution. A draft will be provided separately in advance of the May 16, 2018 meeting.

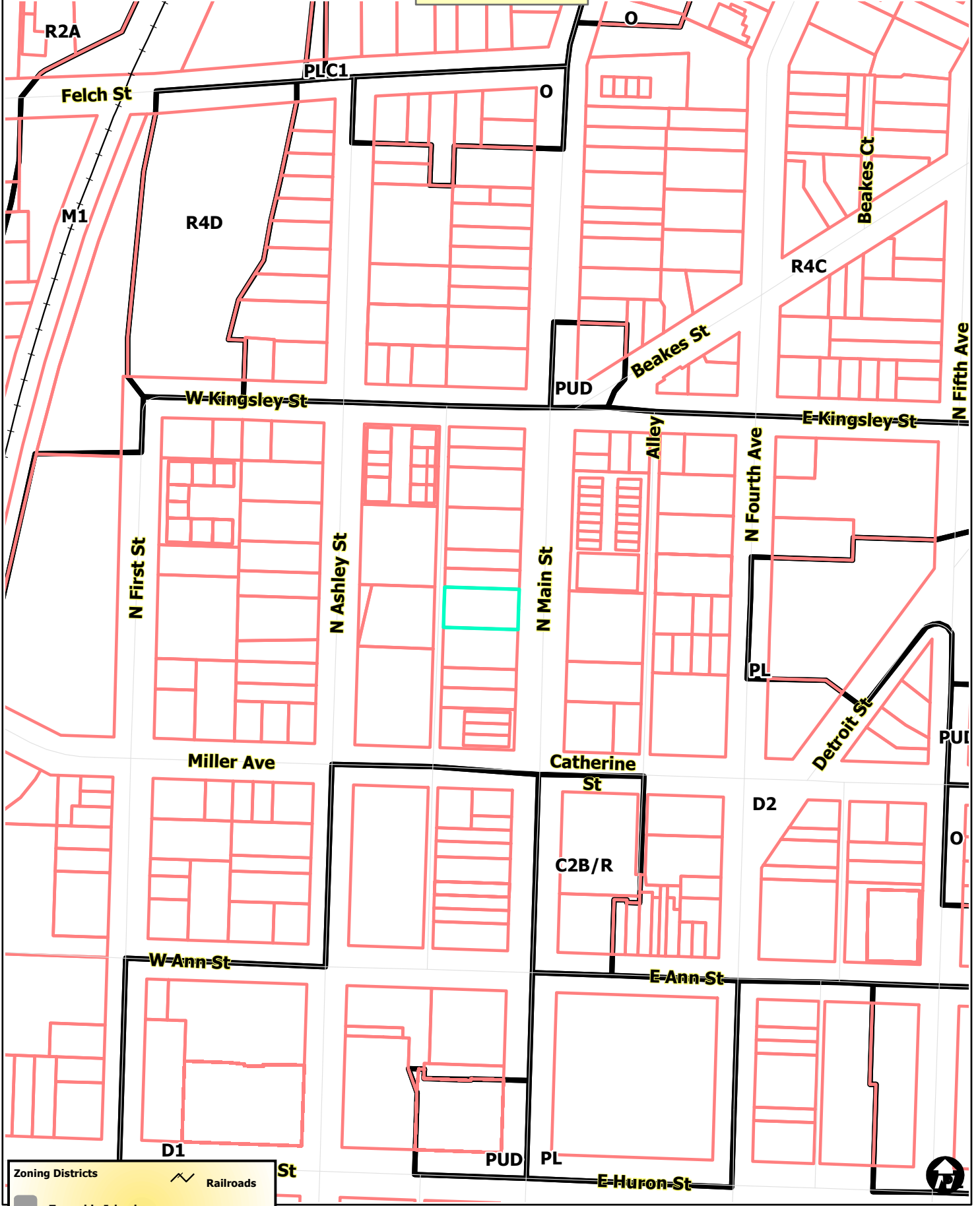
Engineering – Technical revisions to some details were requested; revised plans have been submitted and a review to confirm the requested revisions have been made correctly is pending.

Prepared by Alexis DiLeo
Reviewed by Brett Lenart
5/11/18

References: Zoning Map
Aerial Photo
[Site Plan](#)
[Planned Project Modification Petition](#)
[Citizen Participation Report](#)
Design Review Board [September 20, 2017 Staff Report](#)
Design Review Board [September 20, 2017 Recommendation Letter](#)
Design Review Board [February 21, 2018 Staff Report](#)
Design Review Board [February 21, 2018 Recommendation Letter](#)

c: Petitioner – Erik Majcher, Atlantes, LLC
Property Owner – Peter Woolf, Moving on Main, LLC
Systems Planning
Project No. SP18-009

321 N Main St




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





Map date 1/31/2018
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321 N Main St



 Railroads

 Huron River

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