

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of October 17, 2023

**SUBJECT: University of Michigan Credit Union (UMCU) -2935 Plymouth Road Land Division and Site Plan
File Nos. LD22-2004 & SP23-0018**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the UMCU Site Plan, subject to:

- 1) demolishing the existing structure on site;
- 2) dividing the subject parcel from the parent parcel; and
- 3) a landscape modification for the location of street trees outside the public right-of-way as required in 5.20.10 of Chapter 55.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the site plan be **approved** because, if the proposed conditions are satisfied, it would comply with all local, state and federal laws and regulations.

Staff recommends that this landscape modification be **approved** because the modifications are consistent with the intent of the ordinance.

LOCATION

The site is located on the north side of Plymouth Road, west of Prairie Street (Northeast Area, Millers Creek Watershed, Ward 2).

SUMMARY

City Planning Commission Decisions:

- Petition initially heard on April 4, 2023.
- Denial of site plan and special exception for three drive-through lanes.
- Request for reconsideration on April 18, 2023, also denied.
- Current petition is resubmitted without proposed drive-through lanes.

Building Features:

- Fully electric mechanical and HVAC systems.
- Roof-mounted solar panels.

Development Proposal:

- Demolish existing two-story, 26,330-sq ft office building.
- Construct one-story, 4,790-sq ft credit union building.

- Divide 1.73-acre parcel into:
 - .99-acre eastern parcel for the bank.
 - .74-acre western parcel to remain vacant.

Site Access and Infrastructure:

- Access from existing Prairie St curb cut and relocated curb cut off Plymouth Rd.
- Existing Plymouth Rd curb cut to be shifted 100 feet east.
- 22 surface parking spaces proposed with three deferred spaces for future use.
- Six EV-I and four EV-C spaces proposed.
- Four hoop style bicycle racks at the northwest corner of the entrance.
- Solid waste enclosure with trash and recycling dumpsters at the NW side of site.

Water Management:

- One-hundred-year storm water detention under the northern parking lot.
- Runoff collection through catch basins leading to an underground chamber.
- Rain garden at the center of the site with an overflow structure.
- Outlet pipe to discharge water into the city storm sewer in Prairie St.

Landscaping and Environment:

- 15-ft wide CLUB required along the northern property line, currently at 30 feet width.
- Landscape modification for two street trees on private property.
- Removal of two landmark Honey Locust trees due to curb cut relocation.
- Mitigation trees to be located along the north property line.

Construction Details:

- Proposed construction in one phase.

PETITION NARRATIVE

This petition was previously heard by City Planning Commission at the April 4, 2023 Meeting and the site plan and special exception use for three drive-through lanes were denied. The petitioner requested the City Planning Commission reconsider their denial motion of the site plan. At the April 18, 2023 meeting this request was denied.

This petition returns as previously submitted without the proposed drive-through lanes. The building will be served with fully electric mechanical and HVAC systems and roof mounted solar panels.

This development proposes demolishing the existing two-story, 26,330-square foot office building, and constructing a one-story, 4,790-sq ft credit union building. The approval of this project is subject to dividing the 1.73-acre parent parcel into a .99-acre eastern parcel housing the bank to comply with the proposed site plan. The .74-acre western parcel would remain vacant.

This site will be accessed from one existing curb cut off Prairie Street and one relocated curb cut off Plymouth Road. The existing curb cut off Plymouth Road is to be closed and shifted approximately 100 feet to the east and shared to serve the future development to the west.

A total of 22 surface parking spaces are proposed along the perimeter of the main entrance drives with an additional three deferred spaces if needed in the future on the north side of the site. A total of six EV-I (Installed) and four EV-C (Capable) spaces are proposed. Hoop style bicycle racks totaling eight spaces are also proposed at the northwest corner of the building entrance. Solid waste enclosure is proposed at the northwestern portion of the site and includes trash and recycling dumpsters.

One-hundred-year storm water detention is required and provided under the northern parking lot area. Runoff will be collected through catch basins in the parking lot and yard basins on the sides of the building leading to the underground chamber. Portions of the access drives will flow into the rain garden located at the center of the site. An overflow structure in the rain garden will allow for ponding water to overflow into the underground detention chambers. An outlet pipe will discharge water from the chambers into an outlet control structure, which then slowly releases storm water into the existing city storm sewer in Prairie Street.

A 15-ft wide conflicting land use buffer (CLUB) is required along the northern property line to screen from the residential uses. This minimum CLUB width is met and is proposed to be 30 feet wide.

A landscape modification has been submitted to plant two street trees on private property fronting this site due to the location of the existing sidewalk and utilities in the Plymouth Rd. public right-of-way (ROW). These two proposed street trees are to be planted on the north side of Plymouth Rd within eight feet of the ROW and combined with the two existing street trees to meet street tree requirements.

Two landmark Honey Locust trees are proposed to be removed due to the Plymouth Road curb cut relocation approximately 100 feet to the east. Mitigation trees are located along the north property line.

Construction is proposed in one phase.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Single-Family Residences	R1C (Single-Family Dwelling District)
EAST	Office Complex & Pool Club	O & R1C (Office District)
SOUTH	UM North Campus	PUD (Planned Unit Development)
WEST	Bank with Drive-Thru	O

COMPARISON CHART

	EXISTING	PROPOSED (EAST SITE)	PROPOSED (WEST SITE)	REQUIRED/PERMITTED (EAST SITE)
Zoning	O (Office District)	O	O	O
Gross Lot Area	75,383 sq ft (1.73 acres)	43, 456 sq ft (.99 acres)	31,927 sq ft (.73 acers)	6,000 sq ft MIN
Maximum Usable Floor Area in Percentage of Lot Area	34.9% (26,330 sq ft)	10.9% (4,740 sq ft)	Vacant	75% MAX (32,592 sq ft MAX)
Setback – Front	57 feet-Plymouth Rd 51 ft – Prairie St.	35.7 ft – Plymouth Rd 15.5 ft – Prairie St	Vacant	15 ft MIN 40 ft MAX
Setback – Side(s)	55 ft – North	48 ft	NA	0 ft
Setback – Rear	49 ft – West	173 ft - North	NA	30 ft MIN when abutting Residential
Height	3 stories	1 Stories (26 feet)	NA	55 ft MAX 4 stories
Parking – Automobile	146 spaces (Located below building)	22 spaces (3 deferred)	NA	27 spaces (1/180 sq ft MAX)
EV Parking	NA	6- EVI 4- EVC	NA	2- EVI (Installed) 5% 4 – EVC (Capable) 15%
Parking – Bicycle	N/A	8 spaces -Class C	NA	3 Class C – MIN

HISTORY AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

A site plan for this site was approved in 1969 and the building was constructed in 1969 according to the City Assessor’s office. From an Ann Arbor Observer article in 1998:

1970: 2929 Plymouth. After Gene Power stepped down from University Microfilms, he commissioned Dow to build this small office building just east of Huron Parkway. “I was glad I selected Alden, because my site presented a difficult design problem,” Power recalled in his autobiography, Edition of One. “The zoning regulations stated that floor space could not exceed 40 percent of the land area. There had to be one automobile parking space available for every 110 square feet of floor space, and the structure could be no more than three stories high. Dow met these requirements by raising the building on columns, with only a small entrance lobby and elevator area extending down to the ground-floor level. Most of the area on that level formed a parking lot beneath the rest of the building.”

Power’s son, U-M regent Phil Power, recalls the office as “a lovely place to work. It had a beautiful view of North Campus.

The Master Plan: Land Use Element, Future Land Use Map recommends office uses for this site.

STAFF COMMENTS

Office of Sustainability and Innovation – Solar panels are proposed on the building and the anticipated PV output is requested. The petitioner also proposes to explore energy storage technology. Consider using propane instead of natural gas for the backup generator. The petitioner is seeking sustainability goals in other facets of the project such as the proposed solar array, rain garden and throughout the use of energy efficient building materials.

Systems Planning – Easements are proposed for ingress, egress and maintenance over a proposed shared driveway off Plymouth Road. Such easements will require review by the City Attorney’s Office, execution and recording should the adjacent parcel to the west be sold to a different owner than the subject parcel.

Forestry – Staff supports the requested landscape modifications since street trees are a requirement of city code and there isn’t room for street trees between the sidewalk and road. Street trees are proposed near the ROW line to meet the spirit of the code.

Planning – Staff supports closing the Plymouth Rd. curb cut with the future relocated curb cut being shared for both sites subject to this site plan being approved. Existing sidewalks front both Plymouth Rd and Prairie St. with a relocated bus stop and sidewalk connection off Plymouth Rd. to the proposed bank entrance. The site plan shows proposed sign locations for this site. Signs are separate from the site plan application and require review and approval through the sign application process.

Staff has received numerous opposition communications from neighbors regarding this proposal regarding traffic on Prairie St. and the petitioner is prepared to discuss this concern in greater detail at the City Planning Commission Meeting.

Prepared by Christopher Cheng
Reviewed by Hank Kelley
mg/10/10/23

Attachments: Site Plan
 Zoning Map
 Aerial Map
 [Additional Project Files \(STREAM\)](#)

C:
Petitioner: Deanne Ramos
 University of Michigan Credit Union
 340 E. Huron St.
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Petitioner’s Agent: Ted Hirsch, P.E. & Candice Briere, AICP, PMP
 Midwestern Consulting, LLC
 3815 Plaza Dr.
 Ann Arbor, MI 48108