



City of Ann Arbor Planning Services

301 East Huron Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107

Phone: 734-794-6265 Email: planning@a2gov.org Web: www.a2gov.org/planning

Complete this application and upload a copy with your online submittal along with all other required materials. Apply using the STREAM portal at <https://stream.a2gov.org>. STREAM user guides and general development review process information are available at www.a2gov.org/development. Copies of the Unified Development Code may be downloaded at www.a2gov.org/udc.

Application for Special Exception Use Approval

Applicant Information

Full Name: Sigma Zeta Housing LLC, an Indiana limited liability company, whose address is 3205 Players Lane, Memphis, TN 38125.

Interest in the Land (i.e. owner, land contract, option to purchase, etc.):

Petitioner is the purchaser of the property under a Purchase Agreement dated April 2, 2025, as amended, between Petitioner and the current owner, Diana Jo Johnston, Trustee of The Diana Jo Johnston Trust Agreement Dated December 26, 2001, as Amended, subject to approval of the Site Plan and SEU Applications.

Additional Interested Person and Relationship, If Applicable:

Diana Jo Johnston, Trustee of the Diana Jo Johnston Trust Agreement dated December 26, 2001, as amended, whose address is 805 Oxford Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 – record title owner.

Additional Interested Person and Relationship, If Applicable:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Site Information

Address: 805 Oxford Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Parcel Identification Number: 09-09-33-108-001

A **legal description** of the site must be included on the accompanying, required, site plan. See Section 5.29.8 of the Unified Development Code for required information on all types of site plans including Site Plan for Special Exception Uses.

Special Exception Use

Select the proposed use from the list below. The Unified Development Code sections next to each use provide specific standards for development and approval that apply in addition to normal development and approval standards.

- Multiple-Family Dwelling** – Section 5.16.1.C
- Fraternity, Sororities, and Student Cooperative** – Section 5.16.1.D
- Group Housing** – Section 5.16.1.E
- Club Headquarters, Community Center** – Section 5.16.2.C
- Conference Center**
- Religious Assembly**

- Adult Day Care Center** – Section 5.16.2.A
- Child Care Center** – Section 5.16.2.B
- Private Institution of Higher Learning** – Section 5.16.2.E
- Private School (K-12)**
- Hospital** – Section 5.16.2.D
- General Entertainment** – Section 5.16.3.D
- Indoor Recreation** – Section 5.16.3.F
- Outdoor Recreation** – Section 5.16.3.K
- Automobile, Motorcycle, RV, Equipment Sales and Rental**
- Designated Marijuana Consumption Facility** – 5.16.3.G
- Fueling Station** – Section 5.16.3.E
- Marijuana Provisioning Center/Retailer** – Section 5.16.3.G
- Automobile, Truck, Construction Equipment Repair** – Section 5.16.3.C
- Parking Lot/Structure** – Section 5.16.3.M
- Vehicle Wash**
- Veterinary, Kennel, Animal Boarding** – Section 5.16.3.P
- Nonprofit Corporation Office** – Section 5.16.4.B
- Marijuana Microbusiness** – Section 5.16.3.G
- Marijuana Grower** – Section 5.16.3.G
- Asphalt, Concrete Mixing Plant, Sand and Gravel Pit**
- Marijuana Processor** – Section 5.16.3.G
- Marijuana-Infused Product Processor** – Section 5.16.3.G
- Scrap and Waste Material**
- Slaughterhouse**
- Wireless Communication Facilities** – Section 5.16.5.D
- Medium Term Car Storage** – Section 5.16.3.J
- Drive-Through Facility** – Section 5.16.6.C
- Outdoor Sales Temporary by Others** – Section 5.16.7.B
- Temporary Outdoor Activity** – Section 5.16.7.D

Detailed Description of Proposed Special Exception Use

Please describe the proposed use in detail. *By example, appropriate information for proposed child care centers includes number of children and caregivers, and hours of operation. Appropriate information for outdoor sales temporary by others includes type of merchandise, proposed structures, hours of operation, duration of temporary sales, and security measures.*

Applicant seeks a special use exemption to utilize the property as a University of Michigan-affiliated residence for the Sigma Zeta Chapter of Kappa Delta Sorority. Founded in 2018, the Sigma Zeta Chapter of Kappa Delta has been active on the University of Michigan campus for 7 years with its current leased facility on Tappan Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. The applicant seeks to acquire and redevelop the proposed site to create a new, expanded (appx. 25,000 SF) and updated residence facility for up to 46 sorority sisters plus a house director. The new sorority house will include a chapter room/dining room, commercial kitchen, meeting spaces, media/study lounges, house director's suite, bedrooms for 46 residents in single, double and triple occupant configurations, and associated storage and restrooms/club bathrooms.

General Special Exception Use Standards

The criteria for approval for special exception uses is provided in Section 5.29.5.D of the Unified Development Code. Your responses below will help the Planning Commission determine if the proposed special exception use meets the criteria for approval.

1. How is the proposed use consistent with the general objectives of the Comprehensive Plan?

The current Master Plan includes the proposed use for this property in its future plan map, which includes, among other things, Group Housing such as the sorority as shown in the attached site plan. The proposed project helps create residential density in an area that is easily accessible to downtown and central campus via pedestrian and bicycle travel. Sufficient bicycle storage is provided on the grounds to facilitate the same. The proposed project will effectively convert a single-family home into a residential facility, housing up to 47 individuals. The project is adjacent to two large single-family homes but is in the midst of several other residential facilities providing housing to students at the University of Michigan, all consistent with the existing planned future use of the property. The project is proposed for a site already zoned R2B, which is where the City of Ann Arbor prefers sorority houses such as this. Finally, the proposed redevelopment of the site will provide a new facility with unique architectural features, designed to remain consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and with modern construction, designed to facilitate advancement of sustainability goals, consistent with the goals contained in the currently proposed Comprehensive Plan.

2. How will the proposed use be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so it is compatible with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity?

Significant effort has been made in the design of the facility (tucking it into the hillside for example), so that its appearance including its height, size and scale will be consistent with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity which consists of high quality residential facilities, some of which are single family, but many others serving as fraternities, sororities and cooperatives. The proposed new sorority facility will very much fit in as it will present with a traditional design typical of other high quality designed fraternity and sorority houses in the area. The design will allow virtually all activity occurring on the property to be hidden from neighboring properties.

3. How is the proposed use consistent with the population density, the design, scale and bulk of existing buildings and structures, and the intensity and character of activity in the general vicinity?

The proposed use will add appropriate residential density to an area adjacent to the University of Michigan campus on a site that already has a large building. Its proximity to campus and downtown will facilitate utilization of these areas without the need to drive. Its size, design and scale are all intended to fit very appropriately into a neighborhood already largely devoted to fraternities, sororities and other cooperative living arrangements. However, in light of the still existing single family residential neighbors, the house is also designed to be tucked into the hillside so as to retain the character of the general vicinity and will be built with substantial landscape buffers between it and its single family neighbors. The 3-story construction maximizes the number of residents within the building footprint and the height is minimized by building into the hillside to keep overall size and scale in line with the character of the neighborhood.

4. How may the proposed use impact the use, peaceful enjoyment, economic value, or development of the immediate neighborhood and general vicinity?

The proposed use will have no material impact on the peaceful enjoyment, economic value or development of the immediate neighborhood and general vicinity. The property is designed to keep noise and activity within its boundaries. Because the area is already devoted to a number of similar facilities, adding this facility will not change the character of the neighborhood or general vicinity, nor adversely impact property values.

5. How may the proposed uses affect the environment or natural features on the site and in the general vicinity?

The proposed development will require the removal of approximately 50% of the trees on the site, including woodland and landmark trees, as well as considerable grading and excavation. Significant effort has been made to conserve as many existing trees as possible, with specific consideration given during site plan design to protecting and preserving the largest and oldest trees. Mitigation plantings have been proposed on site to the maximum extent possible. To our understanding, the proposed development does not impact any endangered species habitat, floodplains, watercourses, wetlands or steep slopes.

6. How will the proposed use affect the location and access to off-street parking and protect pedestrian safety?

The current access to Oxford Road is beyond the southerly end of the property and utilizes a driveway on and over the neighbor's property via easement. The proposed site plan relocates the access driveway with a single replacement access driveway northerly along Oxford Road, thus moving it off of the neighbor's property. There should be little or no other impact to the access to off-street parking, and pedestrians will still only need to navigate one curb cut. In order to protect pedestrian safety, new pedestrian sidewalks are being provided and landscaping is designed to be sensitive to pedestrian interactions. Additionally, the proposed site plan provides 22 off-street parking spaces so as to minimize on-street parking needs.

7. What is the relationship of the proposed use to main traffic thoroughfares and to street intersections?

The proposed use is approximately equidistant to both Washtenaw and Hill streets, the nearest main traffic thoroughfares and thus, this development will functionally have the same access to Oxford Road and nearby thoroughfares as exists today. Additionally, it is expected that most daily travel by residents will be as pedestrians or via bicycle. Accordingly, significant daily vehicular access will be minimal.

8. How will the proposed use affect vehicle turning movements in relation to traffic flow routes?

The turning movements from the property onto Oxford Road will be essentially unchanged except moved northerly on Oxford Road and no longer affect the neighbor's property. The site plan provides a back-up/turn around area to allow vehicles (i.e., cars, waste disposal and delivery vehicles, etc.) to turn around on site without impacting traffic flow on Oxford Road. See also, traffic study that accompanies this application.

9. What will be the intensity and character of traffic and parking conditions on the site, and in the general area?

The proposed site plan shows 22 parking spaces. The site will have a single access drive terminating at the parking area. The site plan provides a back-up/turn around area to allow vehicles (i.e., cars, waste disposal and delivery vehicles, etc.) to turn around on site without impacting traffic flow on Oxford Road. Most daily travel from the facility by the residents is expected to be via pedestrian travel, bicycle and public transportation. Accordingly, traffic intensity on site is expected to be low.

10. How will the need for any additional public services and facilities impact the social and economic welfare of the community?

No new additional services and facilities are expected for this site.

11. Does the proposed use match or exceed the standards for density and required open space for the zoning district in which it is located, if applicable, or will a variance be requested?

The proposed use will match or exceed the standards for density and required open space for the R2B zoning district and no variance will be required or requested.

Use Specific Standards

Most special exception uses have use specific standards provided in Section 5.16 of the Unified Development Code. The UDC section providing the specific standards for each special exception use is noted above next to the uses that require special exception approval. Please state each specific standard for the proposed special exception use and indicate how the proposed use meets each specific standard below:

Use Specific Standard a: A resident manager shall be employed or appointed. For purposes of this section, a resident manager is one who lives on-site, serving in a regular or full-time capacity.

Response: The applicant will employ a resident manager who will live on-site and will serve in a regular capacity.

Use Specific Standard b: A minimum *lot area* of 8,500 square feet subject to a minimum of 350 square feet of *lot area* per occupant shall be provided.

Response: The Lot area of the property is approximately 45,600 square feet (1.047 acres) thus exceeding the 8,500 square feet standard. The required minimum square footage of lot area required to meet the minimum standard of 350 square feet of lot area per occupant (based upon 47 occupants) is 16,450. It thus meets this standard as well.

Use Specific Standard c: The *floor area* of the *principal building* shall have a minimum of 5,000 square feet. *Single-family or two-family dwelling* containing 5,000 square feet or less may not be converted to a *fraternity or sorority house, or student cooperative housing*.

Response: The floor area of the proposed building is approximately 25,000 square feet and thus exceeds the minimum of 5,000 square feet.

Use Specific Standard d: *A fraternity or sorority house, or student cooperative housing adjacent to a single-family or two-family dwelling shall have a hedge, berm, fence, or wall, forming a continuous screen at least six feet high along the entire length of each lot line where the adjacency with the single-family or two-family dwelling occurs, except in the front required setback area or as restricted by other ordinance. Screening that continues into the front required setback area shall be consistent with Section 5.26 Fences.*

Response: The southerly and easterly lot lines abut single family dwellings. The proposed site plan accompanying this application provides a combination of privacy fencing and landscaping (e.g., hedges/bushes) of at least six feet high along the entire length of the respective lot lines.

Use Specific Standard e: The maximum number of occupants shall be established by the special exception use, and any increase in occupancy shall require a new special exception use permit.

Response: Applicant proposes a maximum number of occupants of 47, including the resident manager/director.

Use Specific Standard f: Density increases and other modifications to existing *fraternity or sorority houses*, and *student cooperative housing* may be allowed pursuant to Section 5.30 except as provided in Subsection f below.

Response: This application is for new construction and not a change to an existing facility. Accordingly this standard is not applicable.

Use Specific Standard g: Kitchen facilities, common areas for meeting and social space, or handicap accessibility may be expanded by 10% of the floor area or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less, without securing or modifying a special exception use permit if current parking ordinance standards for fraternity or sorority houses, and student cooperative housing are met.

Response: Not applicable.

Site Plan for Special Exception Uses

A site plan is required with all special exception use applications. Indicate which development activity situation applies to your special exception use application. Provide the required type of site plan with your materials.

No Development Activity Proposed – If the proposed use is intended for an existing building or structure, and no development activity is proposed that requires site plan approval, you may submit a **Site Plan for Special Exception**. See Table 5.29-2 for required inform with the required information outlined in Section 5.29.8, Table 5.29-2. Note that certain circumstances may be eligible for an exception from an ALTA land survey, see Section 5.29.8.B.4 for complete details.

New Development Activity Proposed – If the proposed use is associated with any development activities that require site plan approval, a **Site Plan for Planning Manager, Planning Commission, or City Council** is required. See Section 5.29.8, Table 5.29-1, for development activities that require site plan approval, and see Table 5.29-2 for required site plan information by type.

Citizen Participation Requirements

Special Exception Use applications require **Type 1 Citizen Participation**. See UDC Section 5.28.4 for citizen participation requirements and procedures. Guidelines and templates to help fulfill this requirement are available at www.a2gov.org/development.

Report on Citizens Participation meeting is submitted herewith.