

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of May 20, 2025

**SUBJECT: 303 Detroit Street Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval
Project No. SP24-0026**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the 303 Detroit Street Site Plan Version 4 dated May 5, 2025 and recommends approval of the Development Agreement for a Parks Contribution in the amount of \$10,000.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the **site plan** be **approved**, because the contemplated development will comply with all applicable state, local, and federal law, ordinances, standards and regulations. The development limits the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land.

LOCATION:

This site is at the southern end of the corner formed by North Fourth Avenue, Catherine Street, and Detroit Street.

SUMMARY:

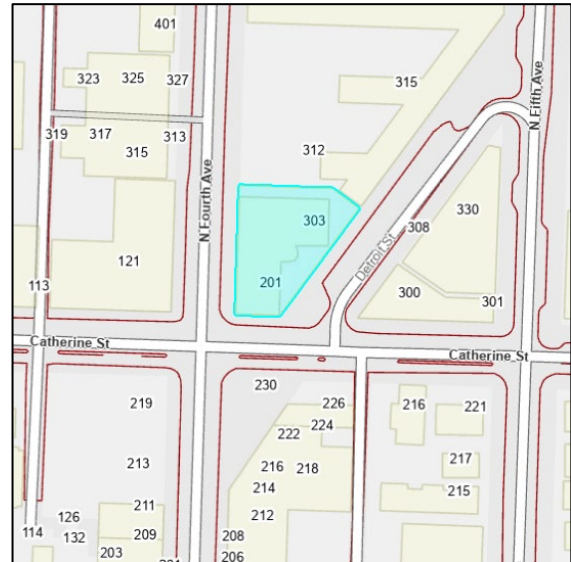


Figure 1: Location Map

A proposed plan to convert 303 Detroit Street from an office/retail building to a residential building with 16 units by adding approximately 10,000 square feet of floor area. Construction includes building an additional floor on top of the existing buildings, adding balconies, and creating a parking garage accessed by a rotating automobile elevator from a new driveway off North Fourth Ave. The proposed project is in the D2 (Downtown Interface) zoning district, Ward 1 and the Kerrytown Character overlay district with Secondary Street type designation.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

Existing Conditions – This 11,613 square feet site has undergone significant development over the past 168 years. It consists of two primary structures: a historic building (Agricultural Hall) from 1856, and a modern addition from 1988. The two buildings are united by an enclosed pedestrian accessway.

The older structure, historic Agricultural Hall, is a three-story brick bearing wall building. Originally serving as an agricultural implement warehouse, it later transitioned to manufacturing farm equipment. Around 1958, the building underwent modifications, including the widening of

brick window openings and installation of aluminum windows, coinciding with its repurposing as the White Swan Laundry.

In 1988, the historic building was extensively renovated for office use, and a new four-story concrete frame building was added to its north side. This modern addition, known as "Market Place" at 303 Detroit Street, features a complementary brick veneer and green curtain wall glazing system. Its design, inspired by architect Frederick Herrmann's style, incorporates a robust concrete base supporting brick walls with distinctive rectangular "punched" windows.

Proposed Development – The proposed development will add one story to the existing buildings, along with external balconies, as part of the conversion of the existing structure from commercial to residential. Approximately 10,000 square feet will be added for a total of 16 residential units. A carousel-elevator parking system, with integrated EV charging, will be constructed and accessed via a new driveway on North Fourth Street.



Figure 2: View Looking West

NOTABLE SITE PLAN DETAILS:

- Sustainability – The residences will be created in an existing building, reducing the carbon necessary for new concrete and steel foundations, structural systems, brick and other energy intensive building materials. The existing geothermal building system will be reused and combined with new electric heat pumps for lower energy use.
- Parking – 13 Electric Vehicle-Installed (EV-I) parking spaces will be provided.

- Bicycle Parking – 39 Class A and 1 Class C bicycle parking spaces will be provided.
- Streetscapes – The project will reconstruct pedestrian infrastructure along North Fourth Avenue, Catherine Street, and Detroit Street.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS REVIEW:

The proposed site plan complies with all applicable development review standards of the D2 (Downtown Interface) base zoning, Kerrytown Character overlay zoning, and Secondary Street designation as provided in Chapter 55 Unified Development Code.

303 DETROIT STREET REVIEW CHART	
STANDARD	REVIEW RESULTS
Article V Administrative Bodies and Procedures	
Required Information	Complies
General Procedures	Complies (fees paid, Type 2 Citizens Participation complete)
Specific Procedures	Complies: Design Review Board complete
Article III Use Regulations	
Permitted Use	Complies: Proposed multi-family residential
Use Specific Standards	Not applicable
Article IV Development Standards	
Zoning District Dimensional Standards [Section 5.17]	
<i>Table 5.17-4</i>	
Min Lot Area/Dwelling Unit	None
Min Open Space, Active Open Space	Min. open space 10% - Complies: 24% open space Max building coverage 80% - Complies: 68% building coverage
Required Setbacks	See below
Max Height	See below
Lot Dimensions	None
<i>Table 5.17-6: Downtown Character Overlay Zoning District Building Massing Standards (Kerrytown Overlay District)</i>	<i>Note: Buildings and additions constructed after December 26, 2009 on lots zoned D1 or D2 in the Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts shall comply with the building massing standards in Table 5.17-6, as applicable.</i>
Streetwall Height	2-3 stories - Complies: 4 stories (existing construction before 2009)
Offset at Streetwall Height	5 ft average - Complies: 5ft
Maximum Building Height	60ft – Complies: 60ft
Massing Articulation	40ft: 60.42ft (existing construction before 2009)
Maximum Tower Diagonal	Not applicable
Minimum Side and Rear Setbacks	10 ft. from a side lot line abutting any R zoning district; 20 ft. from a rear lot line abutting any R zoning district - Complies: 0ft abutting PL

303 DETROIT STREET REVIEW CHART	
STANDARD	REVIEW RESULTS
<i>Table 5.17-7: Secondary Street</i>	<i>Note: Buildings and additions constructed after December 26, 2009 on lots zoned D1 or D2 in the Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts shall comply with the Building Front Setback standards in Table 5.17-7, as applicable.</i>
Front Setbacks	Min. 0 ft. Max. 10 ft. at the streetwall. Up to 20% of the building frontage may exceed the maximum front required setback at the streetwall for entry court or plaza area - Complies: Detroit St, 5ft; Fourth St, 0.78ft; Catherine, 3.82ft
Building Materials	Complies: brick, metal siding
Building Design	Complies: Existing construction before 2017; Buildings and additions constructed after October 25, 2017, on lots zoned D1 or D2 that have primary or secondary street frontages shall comply with the building design requirements.
Special Dimensional and Site Layout Standards [Section 5.18]	
Setback Line and Yard Alternatives	None
Exceptions to Height Limits	Elevator overrun, max 12ft - Complies: 3ft 4in
Parking [Section 5.19]	
Spaces	Complies: 13 EV-I provided
Design and Placement	Complies
Bicycle Parking	Complies: 1/2500 residential sf 100% Class A: 30 provided Complies: 1/10,000 nonresidential sf 100% Class C: 1 provided
Design and Placement	Complies
Driveways	10-15ft one-way, 18-28ft two-way - Complies: 15ft at ROW

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD:

Design plans were reviewed and discussed by the Design Review Board on October 9, 2024. Application materials can be found in the STREAM website at stream.a2gov.org for plan number DR24-0004 and the meeting packet materials including staff report can be found on the Legistar system at a2gov.legistar.org. The architectural drawings submitted as part of the site plan are consistent with the design plan discussed by the Design Review Board.

CITIZEN/COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:

In conformance with Type 2 Application requirements, notification of the proposed development activity was sent to all residents and property owners within 500 feet of the site. No written comments were received and one phone call inquiring about accessing the plans was received. The applicant's summary can be found in the STREAM website at stream.a2gov.org by searching plan number SP24-0026.

SERVICE UNIT COMMENTS:

The site plan and application materials were reviewed by the staff from the Planning, Downtown Development Authority, Fire Marshal, Forestry/Natural Resources, Parks, Engineering, Systems Planning, Solid Waste, Land Development, and Transportation units.

The Transportation Division additionally requested minimizing the negative impacts of dumpsters on pedestrian visibility in the right-of-way through the following mitigation measures:

- High visibility and retroreflective markings,
- Restrictions on the time the dumpsters remain in the street,
- Crash kinematic dampening materials.

Transportation acknowledges that some of their aims conflict with standards and requirements for other units within the city, such as Solid Waste, and the general constraints of urban sites.

A draft Development Agreement addressing the following items will be forwarded to City Council and includes:

- A voluntary contribution of \$10,000 to Parks and Recreation for improvements to nearby and community-wide parks for the proposed increase of 16 households.

Prepared by Julia Shake, City Planner

Reviewed by Hank Kelley, Deputy Planning Manager

Attachments: Site Plan V4 May 5, 2025

Zoning Map

Aerial Map

[STREAM link to all project file documents \(SP24-0026\)](#)

c: Applicant – MAVD (Greg Copp)
Applicant – Huron Contracting (Tom Fitzsimmons)
Engineer – Macon Engineering (Kathy Keinath)
Architect – Rueter Associates Architects (Marc Rueter)
Architect – Rueter Associates Architects (Jim Scrivens)
Project No. SP24-0026