

MEMORANDUM



TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Mariana Melin-Corcoran, City Planner

DATE: December 16, 2025

SUBJECT: PUD Pre-Petition Conference – Ashley Mews (414 S Main St); Proposed Amendment to Supplemental Regulations

A pre-petition conference is a required step to apply and receive approval for a new Planned Unit Development (PUD) Zoning District or to amend existing PUD Supplemental Regulations. This conference with the Planning Commission will focus on the request to amend the Supplemental Regulations to allow all permitted uses of the D1 district in the high-rise portion of the site. There are no proposed changes to the permitted uses in the low-rise portion. There is no proposed change to the site plan. The original PUD and site plan were approved in 1999.

BACKGROUND

The subject site is approximately 2.5 acres, located on the west side of S Main Street, between William Street and Jefferson Street. The PUD zoning and original site plan were approved by City Council on October 18, 1999. Between 2000 and 2002, three administrative amendments to the site plan were processed by the Planning Department. The development consists of townhouses with 48 dwelling units and a 9-story mixed-use high-rise.

The parcels to the north are zoned D1 (Downtown Core) District and have commercial uses. The parcels to the east, west, and south are zoned D2 (Downtown Interface) District and are mixed-use.

The Supplemental Regulations for the Ashley Mews PUD have been amended three times. On May 15, 2000, revisions were approved that included changes to the setbacks, changes to the retaining wall configuration, and the addition of a recycling area. On October 20, 2003, City Council approved revisions that allowed the addition of retail services, general office uses, and other specified uses as permitted uses on the ground-floor of the high-rise component. On March 19, 2007, City Council approved revisions that allowed the addition of retail services and high-technology learning centers as permitted uses on the ground floor of the high-rise component.

The applicant first proposed amending the PUD to include all permitted uses of the D1 district in 2022. A pre-petition conference was held at a working session of the Planning Commission on May 10, 2022. An application was submitted in April of 2023 but did not move forward because, at the time, the Unified Development Code (UDC) required that all owners with a property interest submit or approve any proposed modification to a PUD. On June 2, 2025, [City Council approved ordinance](#) changes that allow any lot owner to have the ability to seek PUD modifications as it relates to their lot. As such, the applicant is now proceeding with their petition.

Figure 1. Conceptual Plan (Approved with Supplemental Regulations October 18, 1999)

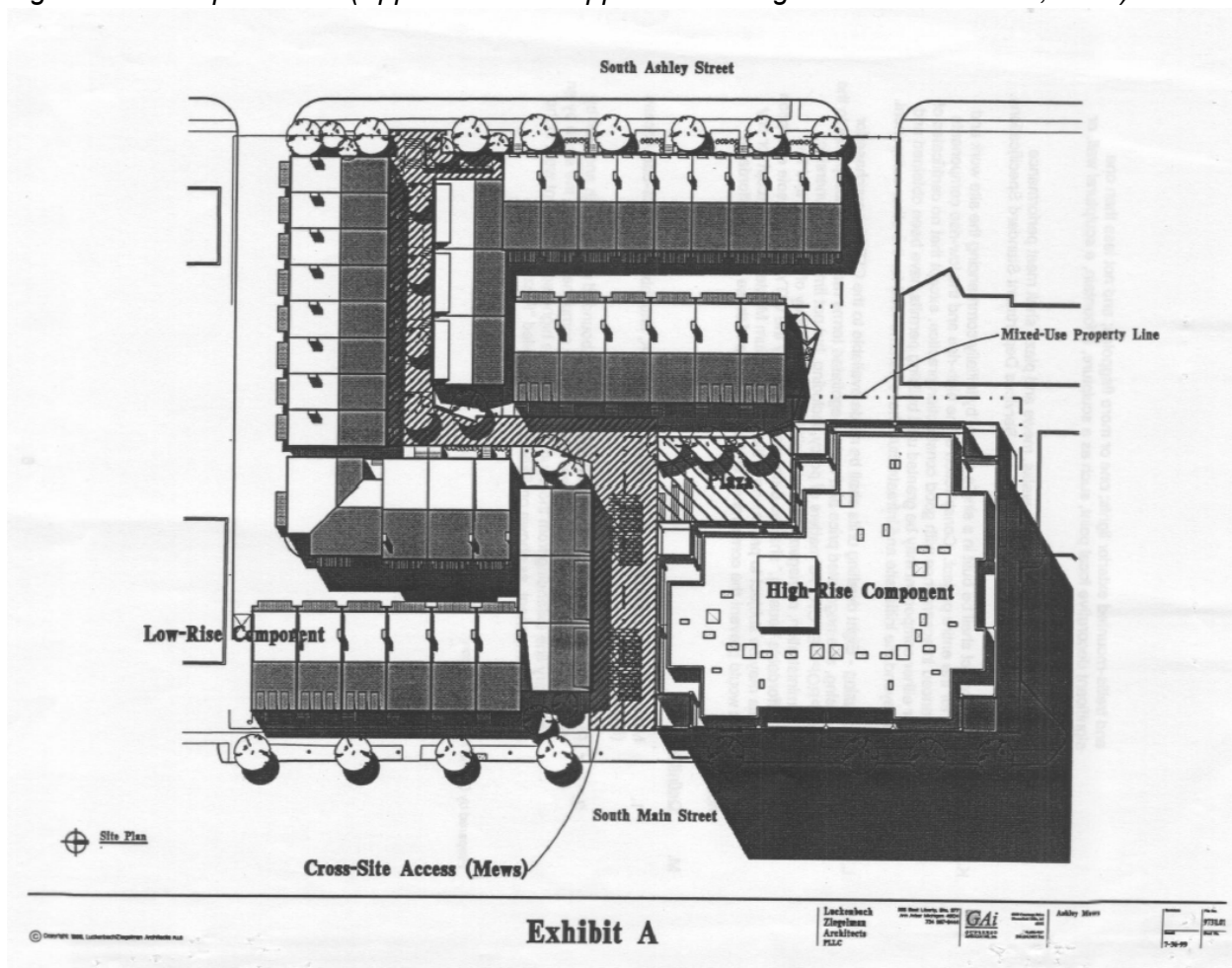


Figure 2. Findings included in the approved Supplemental Regulations (dated October 18, 1999), that established the PUD district.

Section 3: Findings

During the public hearings on this PUD, the Planning Commission and City Council determined that:

- A. The surrounding neighborhood is located within the Core area of the City's downtown, which contains the highest densities of land development, while also being adjacent to the Interface area on its west, which contains a mixture of building types and uses. Additionally, nearby on the west is the Old West Side, an historic neighborhood of predominantly single-family residences in an urban setting.
- B. It is desirable to develop the property described above with a mixture of residential, retail and office uses.

- C. It is in the best interest of the surrounding properties and the City of Ann Arbor that the Downtown Area is preserved and enhanced by providing a high-density, mixed use development on the site which has a high quality of architectural and site design, a strong pedestrian orientation, enclosed and below-grade parking, and a variety of residential units on the lots, described above. The development will have a beneficial effect on, and will not adversely affect, the surrounding properties or the City, in terms of public health, safety or welfare.
- D. The architectural design of the buildings, the limitations on vehicular access, the enclosed parking, the design amenities of the high-rise building and residential units, the sidewalk improvements, the mid-block access, and the availability of eight units for affordable housing will provide beneficial effects for the City, as well as an appropriate transition between the downtown core and the adjacent interface areas, an enhanced pedestrian quality on South Main Street and desirable intra-block pedestrian connections to the residential component and to Ashley Street.
- E. The mixed land uses are not readily achieved within a single zoning district and would necessitate multiple variances within the existing zoning districts.
- F. The parcel described above meets the standards for approval as a Planned Unit Development, and the regulations contained in this ordinance do not constitute the granting of special privilege nor deprivation of property rights.

PETITION

Justification for the proposed changes is included in the attached zoning application. The petitioner states in the zoning application: “Covid 19 has also depressed the demand for office space in Downtown Ann Arbor for today and into the foreseeable future ... Given this systematic change in office demand, the Petitioner believes that a broad range of uses are appropriate for this key Downtown location, and so requests that the PUD Supplemental Regulations applicable to the [high-rise] be amended to allow all uses permitted in the D1 zoning designation. The D1 zoning district is located immediately adjacent to the [high-rise].”

As shown in the attached application, the applicant is proposing three changes to the Supplemental Regulations that would allow all permitted uses in D1 zoning in the high-rise portion of the site. There are no proposed changes to the permitted uses in the low-rise portion or site plan at this time.

In Section 4. A. Permitted Principal Uses:

On the second through ninth floors: all uses permitted in D-1 zoning; offices, comprising no more than 65 percent; and apartment dwelling units, comprising no less than 10 percent of the floor area of the high-rise structure.

In Section 4. B. Permitted Accessory Uses; High-Rise Component:

f) All accessory uses permitted in D-1 zoning.

In Section 4. G. Parking:

Vehicular: Low-rise component – no fewer than one enclosed space per dwelling unit.

High-rise component – As permitted in D-1 zoning.

STAFF COMMENTS

This petition would constitute the third revision to the Supplemental Regulations to add permitted uses in the high-rise building. This indicates that the uses and language should have been more flexible when originally written, especially as the City's needs and goals have evolved. The increased flexibility in the proposed language would allow for all permitted downtown uses, including short-term rentals. This was also noted in the staff memo for the pre-PUD conference that was held in May of 2023.

Overall, staff does not believe that the proposed changes would negatively impact the original findings that established this district. The site would still be developed with a mixture of retail, residential, and offices uses in the downtown and would retain the strong architectural design, pedestrian-orientation, and limited vehicular access. The development is surrounded by D1 and D2 zoning, so the downtown permitted uses would be appropriate.

As part of this proposed amendment, staff is likely to support additional changes to simplify the language and interpretation of the Supplemental Regulations. For example, the petitioner has proposed to update the vehicular parking requirements. Staff would support removing vehicular parking requirements entirely since there is no longer any minimum required vehicle parking in Ann Arbor. Staff also encourages the review and removal of out-of-date language. For example, Section G references Chapter 59 when defining bicycle parking classes, which is no longer accurate. Additionally, the City Attorney's office is considering changes to Section L. Affordable Housing and is working with the ownership to propose updated language to clarify that the affordable units can be rented, rather than just owned.

PUD PROCESS

As provided in Section 5.29.11 of the Unified Development Code, the PUD process involves five steps: community participation, a pre-application conference with staff, a pre-petition conference with Planning Commission, PUD zoning district review and PUD site plan review. The UDC does not distinguish between the process for establishing a new PUD zoning district and the process for amending an existing PUD zoning district, so the petitioner must complete all five steps.

The applicant will be reusing the zoning application submitted in 2023. Because of the elapsed time, a new community participation meeting, pre-petition conference with Planning Commission, PUD zoning district review and PUD site plan review will be required. At pre-petition conferences with the Planning Commission, applicants present the proposed conceptual plan and development program. The Planning Commission may offer *"comments regarding the appropriateness of the proposed land uses, the proposal's conformance with adopted master plan and policies, and the beneficial effects to be achieved"* (5.29.11.C.3).

Attachments: Rezoning Application (dated April 8, 2023)
Proposed Amendments to Supplemental Regulations
Approved Site Plan (dated May 19, 2000)
CPC Staff Memo (dated May 10, 2022)