

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of September 8, 2021

**SUBJECT: Concord Pines Site Plan for City Council Approval & Wetland Use Permit
(660 Earhart Road)
File Nos. WUP21-001 & SP21-006**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Concord Pines Site Plan and Development Agreement, subject to combining the lots and approving the land division prior to issuance of building permits.

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the Wetland Use Permit for the Concord Pines development.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

Staff recommends that the wetland use permit be **approved** because issuance of the permit is in the public interest, the permit is necessary to realize the benefits from the development, and the activity is otherwise lawful.

LOCATION

This site is located at the east side of Earhart Road, north of Geddes Road (Northeast Area). This site is in the Huron River and Fleming Creek Watersheds.

DESCRIPTION OF PETITION

The petitioner proposes combining the vacant 21.7-acre site with a vacant 10.9-acre Concordia College site to the south for a revised 32.6-acre site zoned R1B, Single-Family Residential zoning. The residential zoning allows the petitioner to develop 57 single-family housing units,

which is a permitted use in this zoning district. This site will be accessed off one curb cut from Earhart Road and be constructed in one phase. Total construction cost for this project is approximately \$6,500,000.

Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the proposed interior streets and connecting to sidewalk fronting Earhart Road and a crosswalk leading from this development to the neighborhood to the west.

Each residential unit provides a 2-car garage with wiring and outlets in the garages for residents to plug their EV charging stations into. Bicycle parking is also proposed in the garages. Visitor parking is proposed along one side of the street. A parkland request of \$35,625 has been accepted and confirmed by the developer (based on 57 dwelling units) to be used for area parks.

This site falls under the jurisdiction of the Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioner's Office for storm water detention review and meets the first flush, bank full and 100-year storm water detention requirements by providing three on-site detention basins. Infiltration is provided for the first flush storm event.

There are 447 landmark trees on site with 311 proposed to be removed totaling 6,448 DBH (diameter at breast height) inches removed. As required by code, 50% of the trees DBH must be replaced totaling 3,224 inches. There are also 741 low level woodland trees totaling 4,281 DBH trees on site with 450 of these trees totaling 2,141 DBH inches removed. The overall DBH of trees removed is 5,365 inches. The petitioner proposes planting 1,788 replacement trees to be planted throughout the site (3-inch caliper mitigation trees proposed). A \$265,500 alternative mitigation fee is also required to meet the remaining mitigation requirements.

Street trees are proposed along Earhart Road with a street tree escrow of \$845 required as part of this development. Low level steep slopes are located throughout the site (20-40% slope) and construction is occurring on these slopes. There are steep slopes less than 2,000-square feet (based on being greater than 40% slope) located in the south portion of the site. These slopes are proposed to be stabilized with silt fence and mulch blankets.

There are two wetlands located along the proposed southern property line of this site with the southeast detention basin discharging into the southernmost wetland. Boring under this wetland is also proposed to connect to sanitary sewer. These impacts require approval of a wetland use permit. No structures are proposed in the wetlands or their 25-foot wide wetland buffer.

A development agreement has been drafted to address the Parks and tree mitigation contributions.

A post card was sent to neighbors within 1,000 feet of this site notifying them of this project and a meeting was held on 2/16/21. Meeting minutes are attached.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Greenhills School and Apartments	R1B & R3 (Single-Family Residential and Townhouse Dwelling District)
EAST	US-23 HWY	TWP (Township District)
SOUTH	Concordia University and Residences	R1B
WEST	Residences & Church	R1B

COMPARISON CHART

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	PERMITTED/REQUIRED
Zoning	R1B (Single-Family Residential)	R1B	R1B
Gross Lot Area	945,000 sq ft (21.7 acres)	1,419, 180 sq ft (32.6 acres)	10,000 sq ft MIN
Lot Width	650 ft	650 ft	70 ft MIN
Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	NA	24,898 sq ft	10,000 sq ft
Setbacks	Front	NA	15 ft MIN
	Side(s)	NA	14 ft – north 28 ft - south
	Rear	NA	None
Building Height	NA	30 ft (2 stories)	30 ft MAX
Parking - Automobiles	NA	114 spaces	57 spaces MIN (1 space/dwelling)
EV Parking	NA	57 EV-R spaces	1 EV-R/Garage
Parking – Bicycles	NA	Provided in garage	None

HISTORY & PLANNING BACKGROUND

Concordia University, a private institution affiliated with the Lutheran Church, is located on five parcels totaling approximately 160 acres that surround the intersection of Geddes and Earhart Roads. The main campus area is located south of Geddes Road and consists of academic and administrative buildings and dormitories. Land uses north of Geddes Road include athletic fields, church administrative offices, a private school (Saint Paul Lutheran School, two houses, a barn and wooded area. In the mid-1990's, Concordia College (later called Concordia University) sold a number of single-family homes and parcels along Pine Brae Drive to private parties. Natural areas on the site include Huron River frontage, woodlands and slopes. The northeast portion of the site is within the Fleming Creek watershed while the southwest portion is within the Huron River watershed.

Concordia's master plan recommends that primary academic facilities be located south of Geddes Road. The Plan also recommends athletic fields and residential uses such as married student housing be provided north of Geddes.

The Master Plan: Land Use Element states if Concordia University chose to sell portions of the site, outdoor recreational or residential uses would be appropriate. Residential uses are recommended at a gross density (minus right-of-way) of 7 to 10 dwelling units per acre. Due to the proximity of the US-23 interchange and the AATA bus route (on Geddes Road) as well as the amount of land without significant natural features, the site is appropriate for this density range. A mixture of housing types is encouraged including single-family detached homes, duplexes, townhouses and multiple-family (stacked units). Substantial residential projects could include a mixed-use element such as ancillary retail and offices. Any mixed-use project should have residential uses as the primary component. Any retail use should be located on the ground floor of residential and/or office uses. Strip commercial centers would not be appropriate. Ancillary office uses are appropriate as part of a larger residential project.

Development should be sited away from significant natural features such as the woodland at the northeast portion of the site and the Huron River on the south side of the site. Public pedestrian access should be provided along the Huron River to provide a critical link in the system of public paths along the north and south side of the Huron River. Such a path will provide non-motorized access to Concordia University from downtown Ann Arbor and points east. Public pedestrian access also should be provided along both sides of Geddes and Earhart Roads to encourage pedestrian, bicycle and transit access. Landscaping should be provided around the periphery of the site to soften the visual impact of this gateway site. Outdoor recreational uses are appropriate for any portion of this site.

The Non-Motorized Plan recommends bicycle lanes and sidewalks on east side of Earhart Road.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Parks - The formula for a park contribution to offset the population being brought to this part of town for 57 units is \$35,625.

Systems Planning – Public utility and easement survey sketches and legal descriptions shall be submitted at the construction plan phase of the project. The mitigation calculations for the increase in sanitary sewer flow have been reviewed and are approved. Flow equivalent to 51 GPM, will need to be removed from the sanitary sewer flow from this proposed development. Alternatively, a payment in lieu of performing actual flow removal may be made.

Planning – Staff supports the proposed activity in the two low-quality wetlands and natural features open space as the impacts will be minimal.

Staff supports the development of this site into a single-family housing development as it follows the recommendation of the Master Plan: Land Use Element. This proposal also provides open space for residents and pedestrian connections to the proposed public sidewalk.

Prepared by Christopher Cheng
Reviewed by Brett D. Lenart
mg/08/31/21

Attachments: [Neighborhood Meeting Minutes](#)
[Zoning Map](#)
[Aerial Photo](#)
[Site Plan/Landscape Plan/Elevations](#)
Draft Development Agreement
[Wetland Use Permit Report](#)

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Project Management
Systems Planning
File Nos. WUP21-001 & SP21-006