

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of February 15, 2022

**SUBJECT: 3874 Research Park Site Plan for Planning Commission Approval
File No. SP21-029**

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission approves the 3874 Research Park Site Plan dated January 24, 2022, including the revised elevations dated December 21, 2022, with the following conditions as the site plan complies with all applicable requirements of the Unified Development Code, and other applicable laws, ordinances, standards, and regulations:

1. All lots comprising the Site Plan are combined prior to the issuance of permits; and
2. The developer enters into a Development Agreement with the City, substantially in the form of that attached, prior to the issuance of permits.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that this petition be **approved**, because the development would limit the disturbance of natural features to the minimum necessary to allow a reasonable use of the land; comply with local, state and federal laws and regulations; and would not cause a public or private nuisance.

This petition was previously considered by the Planning Commission in October of 2021, in which a recommendation of approval was provided. With the adoption of Ordinance 21-37, which modifies site plan review authorities, this site plan is returning to the Planning Commission for action vs. recommendation.

LOCATION

The site is located on the west side of the inner ring of Research Park Drive, east of South State Street, south of Interstate 94 (South Area, Malletts Creek Watershed).

DESCRIPTION OF PETITION

The petitioner seeks to demolish the existing 27,250 square foot building and construct a 131,300 square foot single-story research and two-story office building in one phase. The new building contains 60,000 square feet of office space and 70,300 square feet of research space. This site proposes combining five parcels inside the Research Park Drive ring road and has both RE (Research District) and ORL (Office/Research/Limited Industrial) zoning. Both zoning districts allow for the proposed office and research uses.

The project site plan proposes 299 vehicle parking spaces with 150 of these spaces EV-Installed, EV-Capable and EV-Ready. There will be 6 enclosed Class A bicycle parking spaces, 12 Class B and 14 Class C bicycle hoop spaces near the south and east building entrances. A loading dock area and truck well for deliveries will be located at the northeastern corner of the

building. The petitioner proposes a solar system providing a 125kw array with approximately 8,350- square feet of roof mounted panels.

A total of three curb cuts are proposed off Research Park Drive with one off western drive and two off the eastern drive. New five-foot wide public sidewalks will be installed along both Research Park Drive frontages.

There are no existing storm water treatment facilities on the site. Based on the total impervious surface proposed for the site, the petitioner is required to provide detention for a 100-year storm. The storm water facilities will consist of an infiltration basin and rain garden. Approval from WCWRC is attached.

There are three landmark Blue Spruce trees located on the southern portion of the site to be removed. This tree was originally planted as a landscape tree for the previous development. Twelve mitigation trees shall be planted as mitigation for the landmark tree removals. There are no other natural features impacted on the site.

As required by the Citizen Participation Ordinance, the petitioner mailed out postcard notification and held a virtual public meeting in July 2021. There were no negative comments submitted by the public in response to the mailing. Staff has not received any feedback from the public regarding this petition.

The estimated cost of construction will be \$20 million.

COMPARISON CHART

		EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED	REQUIRED
Zoning		RE (Research District)	RE & ORL (Research District) (Office/Research/Limited Industrial)	RE (Research District)	ORL (Office/Research/Limited Industrial)
Gross Lot Area		245,054 sq ft 5.61 acres	736,308 sq ft 16.9 acres	60,000 sq ft MIN	60,000 sq ft MIN
Floor Area in % of Lot Area		11.1% 27,250 sf	18% 130,300 sf	75% MAX 552,231 sf	75% MAX 552,231 sf
Setbacks	Front	73 ft	25.7 ft	25 ft MIN, 50 ft MAX	25 ft MIN, 50 ft MAX
	Side(s)	80 ft	161 ft – South 235 ft - North	0 ft MIN	0 ft MIN
	Rear	136 ft	None	0 ft MIN	0 ft MIN
Height		1.5 story 20 ft	2 story 36 ft	None	None
Parking – Automobiles		42 spaces	299 spaces	298 spaces MIN 358 spaces MAX	298 spaces MIN 358 spaces MAX

EV Parking	NA	EV- I -30 spaces (10%) EV-R – 45 spaces (15%) EV-C – 75 spaces (25%)	EV-I – 30 spaces EV-R – 45 spaces EV-C- 75 spaces	EV-I – 30 spaces EV-R – 45 spaces EV-C – 75 spaces
Parking – Bicycle	N/A	6 Class A (enclosed) 12 Class B (Covered) 14 Class C (hoops)	6 Class A MIN 12 Class B MIN 14 Class C MIN	6 Class A MIN 12 Class B MIN 14 Class C MIN

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
NORTH	Vacant	ORL (Office/Research/Limited Industrial District)
EAST	Vacant	ORL
SOUTH	Office	RE(Research District)
WEST	Gift of Life/Research/Office	RE (Research District)

HISTORY

This site is part of the original Research Park plat annexed from Pittsfield Township and approved in 1961. Federal Mogul Corporation in 1966 constructed a 27,000-square foot building to house Federal Corporation Rubber-Plastics division laboratory and offices. In 1980, a site plan waiver was approved to add a 420-square foot storage structure.

A site plan was approved on February 2, 2020 by City Planning Commission for a research/office building. This petition was withdrawn to allow for the current petition to be submitted.

PLANNING BACKGROUND

The City of Ann Arbor Master Plan: Land Use Element identifies this parcel as part of the South Area and recommends research uses. This site was included in the South State Street Corridor Plan and recommended for office, research and limited industrial uses in the future and ORL zoning (Area 3 recommendations). The Plan also recommends enhanced non-motorized access to buildings.

The 2013 Sustainability Framework Plan references goals to build a more sustainable Ann Arbor community. Three of the Climate and Energy goals include 1) Improve access to and increase use of renewable energy by all members of our community; 2) Reduce energy consumption and eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions in our community; and 3) Reduce new and existing buildings’ energy use, carbon impact, and construction waste, while respecting community context.

STAFF COMMENTS

Systems Planning (Engineering) – The proposed 12-inch water main along the frontage of Research Park Drive shall extend south along the full western frontage of the parcel. The existing 8-inch water main will be abandoned.

The mitigation calculations for the increase in sanitary sewer flow have been reviewed and are approved. Flow equivalent to 16.0 GPM, will need to be removed from the sanitary sewer system in order to mitigate new flow from this proposed development. Alternatively, a payment in lieu of performing actual flow removal may be made.

Traffic – All previous comments addressed.

Planning – The site plan and proposed construction of a new building will be a significant upgrade to the surrounding vacant sites and the research park area. The exterior design of the new building is consistent with the existing buildings in the research park neighborhood. The construction of a new building with a significant investment and intensification of research/office use is consistent with intent of the Master Plan: Land Use Element and South State Street Corridor Plan. Any proposed future phases to this site requires site plan approval.

The petitioner is applying for Brownfield assistance for this site and consideration is required by both City Council and the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners.

Prepared by Chris Cheng
Reviewed by Brett D. Lenart

Attachments: [Parcel/Zoning Map](#)
[Aerial Photo](#)
[Citizens Participation Report](#)
[Site Plan & Elevations](#)
[WCWRC Letter](#)
[Revised Draft Development Agreement](#)

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Systems Planning
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