

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT

For Planning Commission Meeting of October 19, 2021

**SUBJECT: A2 Montessori Child Care Center at Church of the Good Shepard
Special Exception Use with Site Plan for Planning Commission
Approval; 2145 Independence Boulevard**

File No. SEU20-003

PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission, after hearing all interested persons and reviewing all relevant information, including an accompanying site plan, finds the petition substantially meet the standards in Chapter 55 (Unified Development Code), Section 5.29.5.D (Special Exceptions) and Section 5.16.2.B (Child Care Center), and therefore approves the A2 Montessori Special Exception Use for Child Care Center. This approval is based on the following findings:

1. The proposed use will be consistent with the R1C (Single-Family Dwelling) District, which provides for residential use, including special exceptions for religious assembly and child care centers.
2. The proposed use will not adversely impact traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, circulation, or road intersections based on the location. Independence Boulevard provides access to the site, and the proposed use is consistent with the existing and other surrounding uses' traffic impact.
3. The subject site meets the use specific standard for at least 7,500 square feet of lot area and the existing conditions provide at least one off-street parking space for each state-required caregiver in addition to the required parking for the existing religious assembly use.
4. A site plan documenting the existing and proposed conditions of the site has been submitted as part of this application.

This Special Exception Use approval is based on the following conditions:

1. Child care is provided for no more than 40 children.

And that the Ann Arbor Planning Commission approves the attached Site Plan which demonstrates compliance with the applicable Special Exception Use standards as no development which would otherwise require site plan approval has been proposed.

SUMMARY:

A request for Special Exception Use approval for a child care center at 2145 Independence Boulevard, the Church of the Good Shepard. The child care center will occupy several rooms on the lowest level of the existing church, providing care for up to 40 children by 10 caregivers each weekday. No new construction is proposed, however, new fences, sidewalks and additional bicycle parking will be installed on the site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the special exception use be **approved with conditions** because the proposed special exception use is of such location, size and character as to be compatible with the zoning district in which the site is situated; and the location and size of the proposed use, its nature and intensity, the site layout and access, and effect of the proposed use on public services would not be hazardous or inconvenient to the neighborhood nor unduly conflict with the normal traffic of the neighborhood.

LOCATION:

This site is located between Independence Boulevard and Camelot Road, west of Kimberley Road. Ward 3.

DESCRIPTION OF PETITION:

The applicant seeks special exception use approval for a child care center within the Church of the Good Shepard. The center will provide care weekday for up to 40 children with 10 caregivers.

The Church of the Good Shepard occupies a 7,700-square foot building on a 2-acre lot (approximately 88,500 square feet). There are 70 parking spaces, providing all required spaces for both the religious assembly and child care center uses.

Significant site improvements are not proposed. Existing classrooms on the lower level will be redecorated for the child care center. Two existing entrances will be upgraded with new accessible doors and glazing, and the sidewalks leading to them will be made barrier-free. A small area adjacent to the northwest area of the building will be enclosed with a 4-foot fence.

The Ann Arbor City Council approved a site plan on June 16, 2003 for additions to an existing church at this site, and the Planning Commission approved a special exception use for an expanded church with up to 198 seats on May 20, 2003.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION USE STANDARDS:

The Planning Commission, in arriving at its decision relative to any application for a special exception, must apply the general criteria for approval provided in Section 5.29.5.D of the UDC, summarized and analyzed below.

- (a) Comprehensive Plan: The [Comprehensive Plan](#) includes 8 elements, adopted individually between 2009 and 2021. Together, the City Comprehensive Plan elements seek to guide the City towards sustainability, conservation, and increasing livability, affordability, transportation choices, and dense, mixed uses on vibrant, active, friendly streets. The proposed child care center provides an essential service for living and working in the City and will make an existing single-purpose building into a multi-purpose, mixed-use building.
- (b) Compatibility with the general vicinity: A child care center is compatible with the existing church, and compliments the surrounding residential neighborhood. The general vicinity is also compatible with, and complimentary to, care of young children.
- (c) Consistent with the neighborhood and not detrimental: The intensity and character of the child care center are consistent with the neighborhood.
- (d) Parking: The site provides more than the minimum required parking for child care center and religious assembly uses of the proposed and existing capacity.
- (e) Pedestrian Safety: Public sidewalks, in good condition, are present along Independence Boulevard and Camelot Road and throughout the neighborhood.
- (f) Vehicular movement and traffic: The design, layout and location of the site and its parking lot and driveway adequately accommodate the existing and proposed vehicular movement and traffic.
- (g) Natural Features: The proposed child care center will not impact any natural features.

In addition to the general special exception use standards noted above, additional use specific standards are required in Section 5.15.16.2.B for child care centers, including a minimum of 7,500 square feet of lot area and one off-street parking space for each state-required caregiver. The proposed application meets both use specific criteria.

Prepared by Alexis DiLeo, City Planner
Reviewed by Brett Lenart, Planning Manager

10/13/21

Attachments: Zoning/Parcel Maps
Aerial Photo
[SEU Petition Application](#)
[Site Plan, including Floor Plan](#) (Site Plan #3)

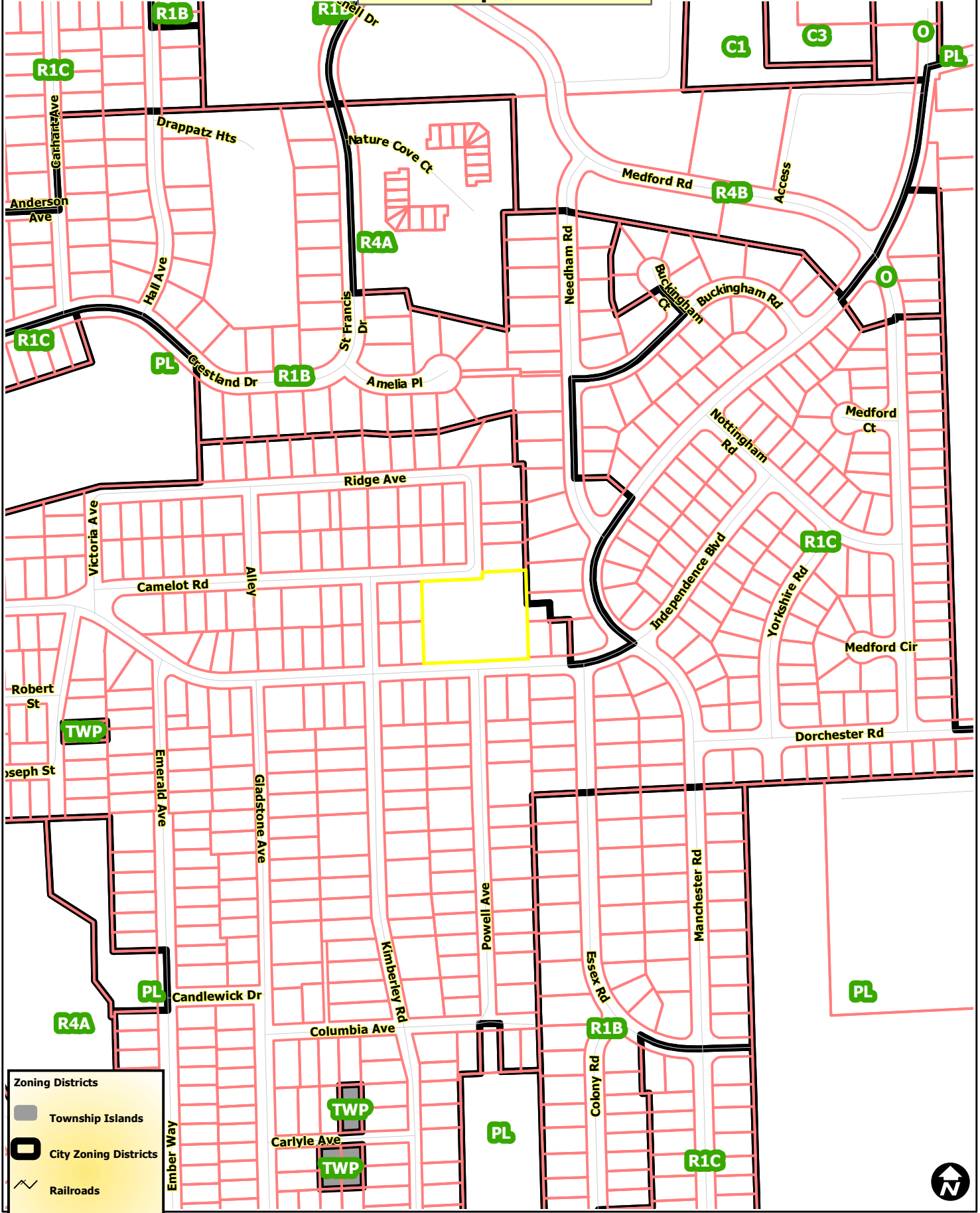
c: Applicant – Paula Pfeffer (paula.pfeffer@gmail.com)

Applicant's Agent – Anna Epperson, OX Studios, 734 Miller Ave, Ann Arbor, MI
48103 (anna@oxstudioinc.com)

Property Owner – Church of the Good Shepard, 2145 Independence Blvd, Ann
Arbor, MI 48104 (pastor@cogsaa.org)

City Attorney's Office
Systems Planning
File No. SEU20-003

2145 Independence Blvd



Zoning Districts

- Township Islands
- City Zoning Districts
- Railroads
- Huron River
- Tax Parcels



Map date: 3/10/2020
 Any aerial imagery is circa 2018 unless otherwise noted
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2145 Independence Blvd

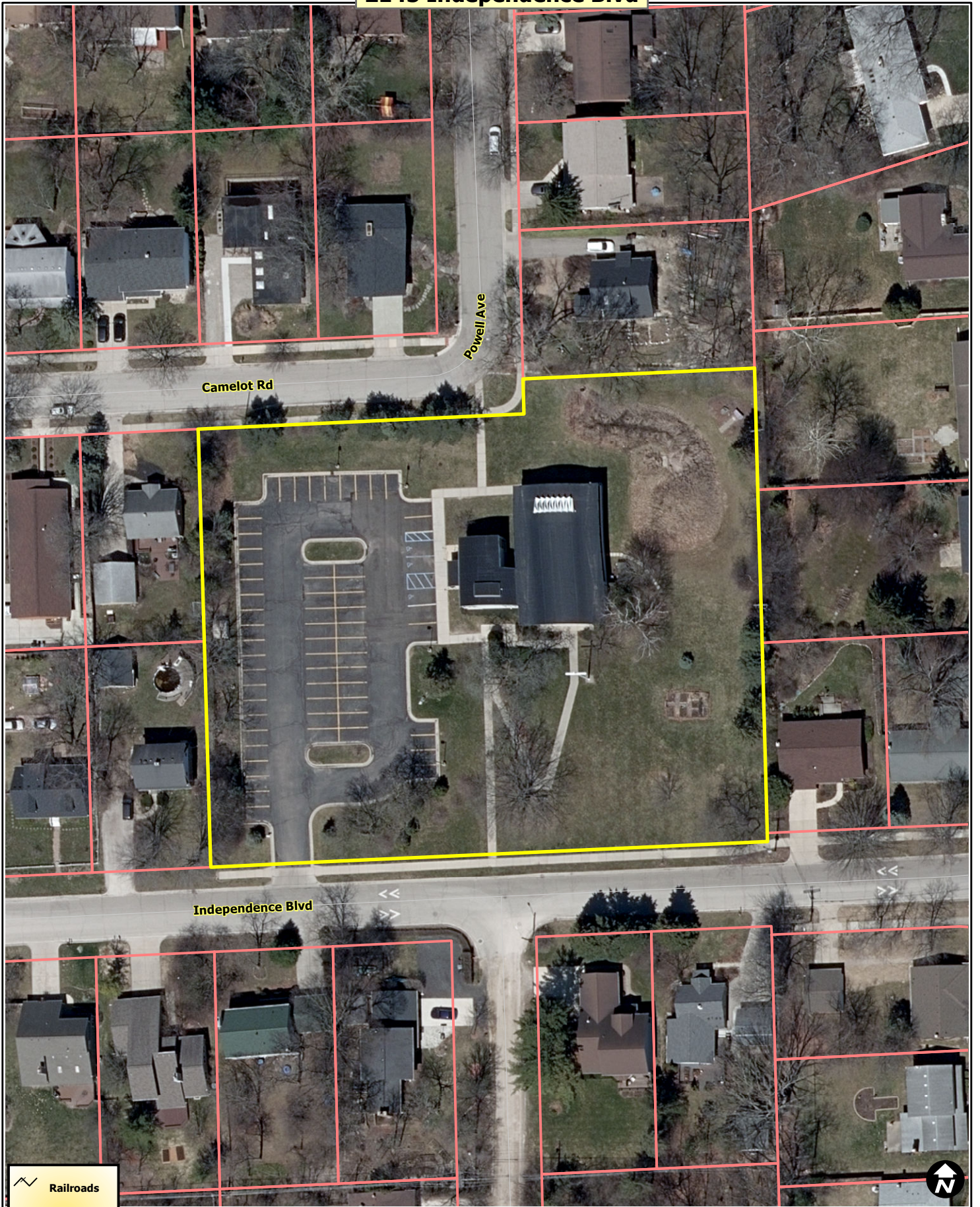


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