

**Zoning Board of Appeals  
May 24, 2023 Regular Meeting**

**STAFF REPORT**

**Subject: ZBA 23-0015; 2025 Traverwood Drive**

**Summary:**

Tom Covert with Midwestern Consulting, representing property owners, is requesting relief from Section 5.32.1 (A) Nonconforming Use to allow a new nonconforming use (medical/dental office) to replace a previous nonconforming use in the existing office building. The property is zoned ORL, Office Research Limited Industrial.

**Background:**

The office building was built in 2000 and is 28,382 square feet in size. The property is located on the north side of Plymouth Road between the Leslie Park Nature Area and the Traverwood Shopping Center.

**Description:**

The building historically has had similar types of uses as the building has served the area as an office complex since it's construction. The property has approximately 130 parking spaces and all the necessary infrastructure to support the proposed use.

**Standards for Approval- Alteration to a Nonconforming Structure**

The Zoning Board of Appeals has all the power granted by State law and by Section 5.32.2, Application of the Variance Power from the UDC. The following criteria shall apply:

- A) When granting such approval, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall determine that such change in use will have a less detrimental effect on neighboring property than the existing nonconforming use.

The applicants had the following response regarding potential detrimental effects to neighboring properties:

The site is currently zoned R4D, however, the site was previously zoned to allow for office uses and the site has been continuously used as a multi-tenant office building since its construction. While many experts agree that the commercial real estate market is returning to near pre-pandemic levels, the demand for office space continues to lag behind. Many companies are still evaluating the amount of office space they actually need with the prevalence of remote and hybrid work. Medical/dental office space, however, is not as impacted by this trend and is still in demand throughout the area. Repurposing this existing office building to allow for medical/dental office uses would encourage the use of existing infrastructure and reduce the need for construction of new medical/dental office buildings elsewhere in the City, as well as allow this property to continue providing an economic contribution to the community and tax base.

The site is located near the intersection of Plymouth Road and Traverwood Drive, in a heavily traveled area of the City. The properties to the south of this site are currently zoned O: Office, and the properties to the north and east of the site are zoned ORL: Office, Research, Limited Industrial. The Oakcliff Apartments are located immediately west of the site and are also zoned R4D. Nearly all of the parcels surrounding the subject site, including the apartments, are owned

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by First Martin Corporation, and First Martin has a great long-standing relationship with the neighbors at the Islamic Center of Ann Arbor (2301 Plymouth Road).

The existing site has the necessary infrastructure in place to support the requested medical/dental office use. The site has direct access onto Traverwood Drive and includes approximately 128 parking spaces, as well as the necessary utilities and storm water management facilities. Use of the site as a medical/dental office is not expected to have any detrimental effects on neighboring properties.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Barrett". The signature is stylized with large, overlapping loops.

**Jon Barrett**  
**Zoning Coordinator**