



STAFF REPORT

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Village Green Municipal Building, Council Chambers

47 Hall Street

Wednesday, April 27, 2016

7:00 P.M.

1. PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Applicant: Dr. Ali Khaksarfard, DDS
Location: Northwest corner of West Olentangy Street and Lincoln Street
Zoning: DB, Downtown Business District
Request: To review a Preliminary Plan proposal to construct a commercial building containing approximately 21,647 square feet on a 2.3 acre site.

Aerial Site Image: <https://goo.gl/maps/zLeXqeFqnLR2>

Project Background

The applicant brought the proposal to P&Z as a sketch plan review on March 23, 2016 (see below). At that meeting P&Z and staff offered the applicant some suggestions (see minutes). Since that application the applicant has made changes and resubmitted for preliminary plan review.

Proposal Overview

The proposal includes the construction of a retail center of about 21,647 square feet in three buildings. It is anticipated that there will be a mix of retail, restaurant, personal service and office users, much like you would see in a typical retail center. The proposed buildings are located at the minimum required 20 foot setback along West Olentangy Street and Lincoln Street. The parking is located behind the buildings with access from both Lincoln Street and Traditions Way. The buildings are being designed as single story with several 20' by 60' retail storefronts, which could be combined to make larger spaces. Storefronts are also located fronting onto Lincoln Street and a couple fronting on Traditions Way, in order to give the buildings some depth and a "wrap around" look. The buildings will have a lower stone water course, with a mixture of stone, brick and Hardi-plank lap and board and batten siding, aluminum storefront door and window units, dormers, and bracket work trim. The applicant's architect has met with the city's Architectural Advisor for recommendations and advice.

Changes since the Last Submission

The applicant made the following changes since the sketch plan meeting.

1. A new site plan is provided with the following changes.
 - a. There are now three separate buildings. Another breezeway was put between the long buildings along Lincoln Street.
 - b. Dumpsters moved from the northwest corner of the site to behind the southwest building.
 - c. More detailed site data now provided (i.e. parking spaces, lot coverage, etc.).
2. Preliminary engineering drawings provided.
3. Landscape, court yard, illustrative and tree preservation plans provided.
4. Development text provided.
5. Traffic impact study also provided.
6. The total square footage of the buildings has increased by 587. Going from 21,060 to 21,647 square feet.

Ordinance Review

In accordance with the requirements of codified ordinance 1143.11(g), in approving a preliminary development plan, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider:

(1) If the proposed development is consistent with the intent and requirements of this Zoning Ordinance;

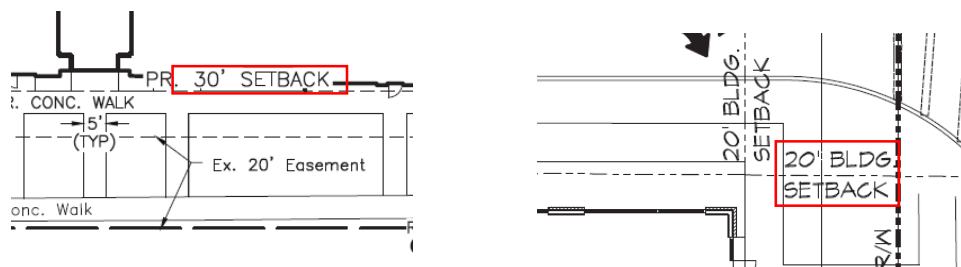
The development is located in the Downtown Business (DB) District and is generally consistent with the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

First, this development is in line with the purpose of the DB district, "to preserve, protect, and promote the village-scale central commercial and office environment through promotion of mixed use pursuits developed in a manner that is pleasant, safe, and convenient..." This proposed "mixed use pursuit" through its scale, design and uses, will add to the pleasantness of the old village by creating a new well-designed space that extends the historic downtown westward. It will also provide additional services in the center of the city along a major thoroughfare, providing convenient access to both residents and visitors who pass through the community. Lastly, the extension of walkways from the path along Powell Road into the site will make for a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience. Visitors to the downtown core will be able to park their cars in any part of the old village and walk to this site with ease and safety.

Second, the DB district's purpose statement also calls for "small-scale residential, office, and retail uses that was the hallmark of village life, and minimization of the impact of provisions for auto parking on loss of community character." This development is small scale with office and retail uses that are small in scale. The building is one story and roughly 29 feet high. As for auto parking, it is in the rear of the building screened away from the main road by the building itself, which ensures the preservation of community character.

Third, the DB district permits retail shops, office facilities, convenience businesses, and personal services to name a few. As a result, the proposed mix of office, retail, restaurant and medical offices are all permitted uses.

Fourth, the proposal is consistent with most of the dimensional requirements of the code. The development is consistent with the principal building setback requirements of: 20 feet minimum and 25 maximum front yard and both 5 feet side and rear yards. However, this depends on which site plan is used for review. The site layout plan by E.P. Ferris shows a 30 foot setback, while the Thomas Berry site plan shows 20 foot setbacks. Staff asks the applicant to clarify which site plan is correct. The maximum lot coverage allowed in the DB district is 20%, the applicant is requesting 21.6%. A divergence would be required but staff has no issues with this. Buildings all have a separation of 12 feet or greater, larger than the required 10 feet required by code. All building heights are approximately 29 feet or shorter, less than the 35 feet maximum allowed by code.



Lastly, the applicant has provided 96 parking spaces. Staff requires more detailed estimates of restaurant, office and retail spaces in order to determine the required parking spaces. A preliminary analysis was completed using assumptions below:

Retail (1149.07(b)(20)): Retail stores and all other types of business or commercial uses: Five (5) spaces plus one (1) for each 400 square feet of floor area.

Assuming 8 retail stores

8 stores * 5 spaces required per store = 40 spaces

Assuming 11,000 square feet (from traffic study) of retail space = $11,000/400 = 27.5$ spaces

Total spaces reduced by 50% for building in the downtown = $(40+28)/2 = 68 \Rightarrow$ **34 Spaces**

Office uses, administrative, business and professional (1149.07(b)(18)): One (1) for each 200 square feet of floor area.

5,500 square foot estimate provided by traffic study

5,500 square feet (Dentist office)/200 = 27.5

Spaces / 2 (50% reduction for downtown district) = $27.5/2 = 13.75 \sim$ **14 Spaces**

Eat-in restaurants (1149.07(b)(8)): Twenty-five (25) spaces, or one (1) for each three (3) seats, plus one (1) for each two (2) employees, whichever is the larger.

5,500 square feet (traffic study) with 60% available for seating = 3,300 square feet for dining

Assume 15 square feet per patron for full service dining = $3,300/15 = 220$ people/seats

$220 \text{ seats}/3 = 73$ spaces

Assume 20 employees = 10 spaces

Spaces / 2 (50% reduction for downtown district) = $(73+10)/2 = 41.5 \sim$ **42 Spaces**

Based on the above analysis, the minimum required parking is 90 spaces and the applicant is providing 6 more than required. By simple numbers, it is clear there are more than enough spaces. However, further qualifications are needed. First, doctor's offices and restaurants have inverse operating hours. When one is open, the other is likely to be closed. As a result, any dentist office parking will be open when the restaurant is open and vice versa. Also, since there is ample parking, staff has suggested a partnership with the new development proposed to the west to share parking. Further to that, staff would like to see a connection between Village Pointe through to this proposed plaza. This would not only help with access management but also open up a great deal of underutilized parking. Thereby lessening the need for more parking and using land for higher function purposes.

(2) The appropriateness of the proposed land uses with regard to their type, location, amount, and intensity, where not specifically specified in this Zoning Ordinance;

The proposed development is very well suited for the site. As noted above, the type and location is consistent with the zoning ordinance. In addition, this development would be instrumental in helping to expand the downtown core across the rail road tracks. There is some development across the tracks already but this new building would have a greater relationship, through its design and mixed used, with the old village core. Visually, users and passersby would both clearly see the village as larger than it is today.

The amount and intensity is somewhat more than most of the old village center. However, it is similar to 50 South Liberty and its location is well suited for a more intense downtown use. It sits perfectly as a transition between the more suburban feel of Sawmill Parkway and the smaller scale of the old village core. Its location essentially makes it well suited for the amount and intensity proposed.

(3) The relationships between uses, and between uses and public facilities, streets, and pathways; As stated in #2, the location of the proposed development is ideal for what is being proposed. It serves as a transition piece between two vastly different areas. To elaborate on the proposal's neighbors, it is bordered on all sides by commercial except the northwest, where there is residential. The commercial uses surrounding the site will benefit from the synergy of having another commercial use. There may be some negative impact on the residence to the northwest, but as this is a downtown area, it is not unexpected that commercial and residential homes will intermingle. Overall, the site should have many positive impacts on its surrounding business neighbors. Ranging from increased foot traffic for businesses to increased aesthetic appeal of the area.

Public facilities will not be impacted by this development and the existing pathway along the south end of the site will remain. Furthermore, pathways will be added along the east and west side of the site.

The streets will have some negative impact. A traffic impact study was provided as part of the application package. The summary from the study is below.

Summary:

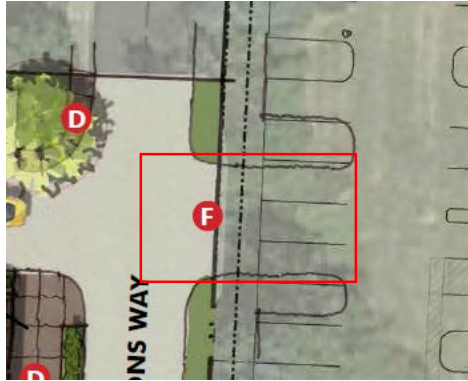
The site drives and adjacent intersections operate acceptably with year 2017 opening day conditions. In the 2027 and 2037 horizon years, SR 750 continues to operate well, but the Traditions Way and Lincoln Street side streets will experience increasing delay. Widening southbound Lincoln Street to provide a left turn lane and a through/right lane will help reduce delay for the side street. An eastbound left turn lane on SR 750 to Lincoln Street will improve access to the site and reduce delay for SR 750.

The City of Powell should consider pursuing dedicated right of way for W. Case Street to make it a through street to Village Point Drive. This would provide access to a signalized intersection, which will also help reduce delay for the side streets adjacent to this project.

Overall, it seems that with the development, many of the streets will see minimal increases in delay (wait times ranging from 2-10 seconds more). Traditions Way and Lincoln Street, on the other hand, will be significantly impacted during the PM peak period (wait times ranging from 4 to 90 seconds more). Staff would like to highlight that there is a significant impact on these two side streets but that the level of service (LOS) for both no-build and build scenarios remains the same, F. Meaning that with or without this development, the side streets will have delays in the future. As a result, it is staff's opinion that the positive aspects of this development on community character, convenience and tax base for both schools and city outweigh the longer wait times on the side streets or the minimally increased wait times on the surrounding streets. That being said, staff would like more detail about the recommended improvements and what positive impacts they could have on the roadway system, especially in terms of wait times. Staff would also like to mention that it does not take traffic concerns lightly, it is a very high priority and that a group of council members, staff, and consultants have begun a process to look at downtown traffic and try to address it. However, it should be made clear that traffic should not supersede developments that have overall positive impacts for the community and its residents. The recommended improvements of West Olentangy Street and Lincoln Street made by the traffic study should be engineered and constructed by the applicant. The improvement to West Case Street is an off-site improvement the City is going to have to make, as this development is not specifically making a direct impact upon it.

(4) Adequacy of provisions for traffic and circulation, and the geometry and characteristics of street and pathway systems;

The onsite circulation of the site is more than adequate. Staff is pleased to hear that the applicant is working with the developer to the west to mirror the access drives to improve safety.



As per the traffic study provided by the applicant, road improvements may need to be done as part of this development. Staff would, however, like to highlight the need of the applicant to understand the proposed improvements that may be done by the development to the south and east (Powell Crossing). This applicant shall work with the city and the Powell Crossing developer to coincide with their own development.



Pathways are to remain unchanged and unaffected along the front of the site.

(5) Adequacy of yard spaces and uses at the periphery of the development;

The yard spaces for such a development are adequate. In addition, the courtyard feature in the center of the development will provide a nice public space.



(6) Adequacy of open spaces and natural preserves and their relationships to land use areas and public access ways;

The site does not have open space or natural preserves.

(7) The order, or phases, in which the development will occur and the land uses and quantities to be developed at each phase;

The development is not anticipated to be developed in phases.

(8) Estimates of the time required to complete the development and its various phases;

The letter from the owner states that they would like to begin construction right away. It is assumed by staff that due to the scale of the development, it may take between 12-18 months to complete.

(9) Improvements to be made by the Municipality, if any, and their cost;

Improvements by the municipality will not need to be made. All upgrades will be provided for by the applicant. In case there is a shared improvement, the city and developer may need to enter into an agreement.

(10) The community cost of providing public services to the development, and

There is no community cost to providing public services. Their proximity to the police department is also a plus.

(11) Impacts of the development on surrounding or adjacent areas.

As stated at the beginning of this staff report, staff sees a significant positive impact on the surrounding area from this development. This development will continue the trend toward revitalization and new construction that is in line with the scale and design of the old village character. Furthermore, the greater Powell area will benefit from another service and retail center for our residents to enjoy.

The Planning and Zoning Commission may require the staging of the planned development to minimize early stage major impacts on the community infrastructure and services systems, and may require the staging of land uses to be generally consistent with the phased development of supporting land uses and public services and facilities.

The Commission's approval in principle of the preliminary development plan shall be necessary before an applicant may submit a final development plan. Approval in principle shall not be construed to endorse a precise location of uses, configuration of parcels, or engineering feasibility."

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The proposal of the mixed use building is in line with the city's 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, in regards to development guidelines:

1. Commercial and mixed use buildings should be located adjacent to the public sidewalk with prominent main entrances and storefront windows (p.30).
2. High quality materials and architectural detailing is critical to ensure new development contributes to the village character (p.30).

Regarding overall land use policy recommendations:

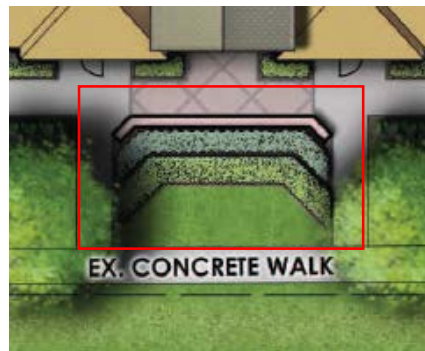
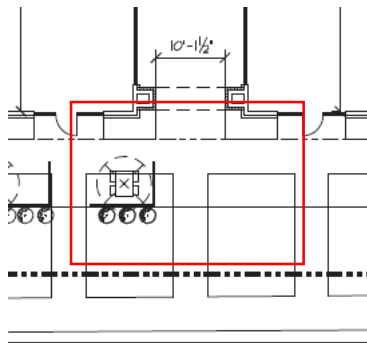
3. Maintain the Character of the Community in its Historic Village District (p.48). A mixed use retail center is in-line with the type of commercial/office model used in past.
4. Encourage mixed use development in appropriate locations, as designated in the plan (p.48). The location of this use is perfect for this type of use. It is very close to the four corners and is a gateway feature into the Village Green.

Staff Comments

Overall, staff is very pleased with this development. It is going to revitalize an underutilized piece of land that is close to our downtown. Instead of an open area with a for sale sign, we will get a commercial/office space that will provide residents and visitors with another service and another reason to enjoy the downtown core.

The design is high quality and the added breezeway on the east side is appreciated. The details and materials proposed also look as though they will blend nicely with the downtown core. Again, this is a transition area between more suburban forms of development to the west and the old downtown core to the east. The overall aim should be to tie more into the old village than the building types to the west. Also, staff would recommend that the development text specify that it is required for all retail spaces to have a door fronting a street. This is to ensure that access is not only from the parking area, which in turn, further promotes a pedestrian sense to the development. Staff defers to the Architectural Advisor for further architectural comments.

This is a very well prepared submittal by the applicant's consultants. However, there were some discrepancies between the different pieces. Namely, the front entrance is inconsistent amongst the different drawings (see below). Also, as stated above, the setbacks are 30 feet in one drawing and 20 feet in another. Lastly, the number of trees proposed is 31 not 30 on exhibit D-1. Please correct and carry through the plans. Overall, we appreciate the hard work and complete submission.



The City Engineer also provided some preliminary comments. Most importantly, the City Engineer would like to see natural systems used (bio swales, bio basins, etc.) before manufactured systems for stormwater management, as they are more desirable for post construction maintenance. Please contact the engineering department for more details.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends preliminary plan approval with the following conditions:

1. Allow divergence of 1.6% lot coverage.
2. Provide more details about the square footage use of the building.
3. Work with the neighbors to the west to share parking and create shared access drives.
4. Coordinate roadway improvements and storm water management concerns with the City Engineer.
5. Correct the minor inconsistencies between the drawings and illustrations.

Sketch Plan Review – March 23, 2016

Project Background

This property was once reviewed as a Sketch Plan in 2003 for a mixed use commercial and office development. Although that project never came to fruition with a development plan, it was well received as it fit in with the downtown look and feel. That plan had 2nd story office over first floor retail. The buildings were pushed up toward the street with parking in behind the buildings with access from Lincoln Street and Traditions Way. This proposal is taking a look at a similar type of development, with only one story retail and office as the possible uses.

Proposal Overview

The proposal includes the construction of a retail center of about 21,060 square feet in two buildings. It is anticipated that there will be a mix of retail, restaurant, personal service and office users, much like you would see in a typical retail center. The proposed buildings are located at the minimum required 20 foot setback along West Olentangy Street and Lincoln Street. The parking is located behind the buildings with access from both Lincoln Street and Traditions Way. The buildings are being designed as single story with several 20' by 60' retail storefronts, which could be combined to make larger spaces. Storefronts are also located fronting onto Lincoln Street and a couple fronting on Traditions Way, in order to give the buildings some depth and a "wrap around" look. The buildings will have a lower brick water course, with Hardi-plank board and batten siding, aluminum storefront door and window units, dormers, and bracket work trim. The applicant's architect has met with our Architectural Advisor for recommendations and advice.

Staff Comments

The property is located within our DB, Downtown Business District. The uses within this district are to be small commercial shops, offices and restaurants, service businesses, etc. The front building setback is 20 feet minimum and 25 feet maximum, in order to bring the buildings up to the street to create a similar downtown core development pattern, along with parking to the rear. It may be advisable to actually move the buildings closer to the street, say to 10 or 14 feet, so as to be even with the existing buildings to the east, or maybe stepped back from there a bit so as to "step back" from east to west.

The parking behind the buildings allow for access off of Lincoln Street and Traditions Way at driveway locations where they will not interfere with the intersection at West Olentangy Street. There is a common access driveway easement at Traditions Way for use by this property, which was required by the City at the time The Traditions were approved. Coordination of the driveway location with the development to the west will be very important. There is a plan that was approved for retail to the west which may soon come back for re-approval. Staff will attempt to coordinate these drive locations in a proper manner.

There will need to be some coordination of the streetscape along Lincoln Street. There needs to be a sidewalk along there to connect to the north. Also, it may be a good idea to implement some on street parallel parking at this location. The throat of the intersection of West Olentangy Street and Lincoln Street will require widening. A traffic study is underway to provide us recommendations for road improvements necessary to implement this project.

The lot coverage seems reasonable for both building and total lot coverage. There is plenty of green spaces available for decent landscaping. The ability for patio uses should be planned for with this development and it appears as if that is being done. The applicant's engineer has met with our City Engineer and understands the storm water detention requirements. This will probably be a combination of underground storage and use of pervious pavement.

No signage is shown, however there does appear to be areas that will be lighted by hanging lights where signs could be placed. A complete sign plan will be submitted for review later.

Ordinance Review

In accordance with the requirements of codified ordinance 1143.11(a), the Commission shall review the Sketch Plan with the Owner and provide the Owner with comments during the meeting, it being understood that no statement by officials of the City shall be binding upon either. This submission is informal and for the purpose of establishing communication and discussing the concept for developing the tract. No formal action will be taken on the Sketch Plan.

Staff Recommendation

Staff believes that this is the start of a very good plan for the community. The ability for the City to extend its downtown core to the west has been anticipated for many years. This proposal will bring better retail and office type spaces to the downtown area, and extend its vibrancy west of the railroad tracks. The concepts provided for in this sketch plan is a good start, with many details yet to come forward with the Preliminary Development Plan. We look forward to working with the applicant and continue to detail this proposal fitting in with the downtown core and its continued growth.